

IV. APPLICATION ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

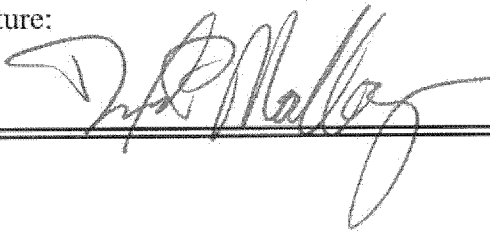
(CFDA No. 84.412)

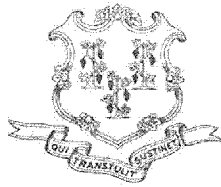
Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Governor Dannel P. Malloy	Applicant's Mailing Address: Executive Chambers State Capital Hartford, CT 06106
Employer Identification Number: 06-6000798	Organizational DUNS: 079102530
Lead Agency: Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Contact Name: Myra Jones-Taylor, Executive Director	Lead Agency Contact Phone: 860-713-6411 Lead Agency Contact Email Address: <u>Myra.Jones-taylor@ct.gov</u>
<p>Required Applicant Signatures <i>(Must include signatures from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. Insert additional signature blocks as needed below. To simplify the process, signatories may sign on separate Application Assurance forms.):</i></p> <p>To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct. I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:</p>	
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Governor Dannel P. Malloy	Telephone: 860-566-4840
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: (b)(6)	Date: 10/11/2013
Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Myra Jones-Taylor, Executive Director	Agency Name: Office of Early Childhood
Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative: (b)(6)	Date: 10.11.13

Accountability, Transparency, and Reporting Assurances

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures that the State will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B and D (Assurances for Non-Construction and Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards, including Davis-Bacon prevailing wages; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders, and regulations.

- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the State will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the State will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.
- The State and other entities will comply with the following provisions of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), as applicable: 34 CFR Part 74 -- Administration of Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations; 34 CFR Part 76 -- State-Administered Programs, including the construction requirements in section 75.600 through 75.617 that are incorporated by reference in section 76.600; 34 CFR Part 77 -- Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations; 34 CFR Part 80 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, including the procurement provisions; 34 CFR Part 81 -- General Education Provisions Act—Enforcement; 34 CFR Part 82 -- New Restrictions on Lobbying; and with the debarment and suspension regulations found at 2 CFR Part 3485.

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):	
Governor Dannel P. Malloy	
Signature: 	Date: 10/11/2013



Dannel P. Malloy
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
United State Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
United State Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Re: Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius:

Over three years as Governor, I have made improving the educational and health outcomes of young children with high needs a top priority. Together with the Connecticut General Assembly, Connecticut added 1000 more spaces to our state pre-kindergarten program School Readiness, and after a planning period, we established the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to administer a comprehensive, coordinated system of early childhood services and supports for children from birth to age five. Connecticut is making progress; however, there remains much work to do.

Connecticut's reality remains that one in four children enters Kindergarten without the skills, knowledge, and behaviors, needed to succeed – reducing their chances of reaching their educational potential and contributing to the worst achievement gap of any state in the country. With Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant application, we ambitiously seek to achieve a 50% increase in the percentage of children with high needs who are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs prior to Kindergarten and who, therefore, will enter Kindergarten ready to succeed.

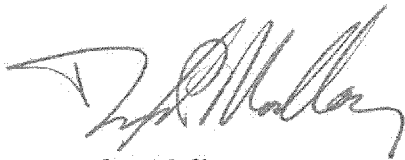
Connecticut has invested billions of dollars in early childhood programs over the years, but educational outcomes for our most vulnerable young children have not significantly improved. We have created excellent programs that reach some children during some of their early years, but we continue to work towards an integrated, comprehensive system that reaches every high-need child in every setting.

That is why, in June of this year, upon the Connecticut General Assembly providing funding, I created by Executive Order, the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) as a cabinet-level agency reporting directly to me. Within a few short weeks of signing the Executive Order, the OEC began the integration of state programs that center on young children. Three programs have been transferred from other state agencies, and we anticipate two additional programs will move to the OEC as well. Through this new governance structure, we will transform the early childhood education paradigm to improve academic outcomes for children and their caregivers. While Connecticut undertakes our proposed Race to the Top projects to further develop our comprehensive system of early childhood care and education, we have already taken steps to ensure that our Head Start programs continue to be available to children with high needs even during periods of federal government shut down.

Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) proposal will enable Connecticut to accelerate ongoing efforts to strengthen our state system, including the implementation of the ConnectCT to Quality (C2Q), our tiered quality rating and improvement system, and, the complementary technical assistance network and professional development system that will further enhance the capacity of Connecticut's dedicated early childhood workforce. Our proposal builds upon years of investment and planning, but at the same time represents a dramatic shift in the way our state coordinates its federal, state, and local resources to produce brighter futures for our children. Only through improved service coordination, integration of early care learning and development standards, and quality improvements included in our RTT-ELC proposal will Connecticut be able to achieve our goal of accelerating the increase in the number of high needs children who will be enrolled in high quality care and learning settings.

There is no doubt that a talented workforce is critical to our future. Developing a talent pipeline requires investment across the educational continuum, but most importantly, demands a commitment to invest in the education, health and well-being of our youngest children. Connecticut has made that commitment. That is why I am proud to present to you Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application. Our RTT-ELC proposal aligns with my agenda to improve health, development and educational outcomes for young children, to reduce the achievement gap, and to build a world-class workforce. At its core our RTT-ELC proposal reflects Connecticut's belief in our fundamental responsibility to provide an opportunity for all children to succeed.

Sincerely,



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor, State of Connecticut

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood (“Lead Agency”) and Board of Regents for Higher Education (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency’s Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);

- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education (“ED”), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”);
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency’s Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency’s Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State’s application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency’s status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency’s Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY’S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

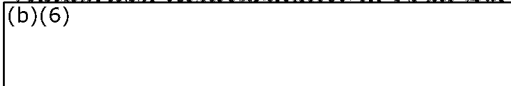
This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES**Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:**

(b)(6)



10.11.13

Date

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor

Executive Director

Print Name

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)



10/8/13

Date

Dr. Gregory W. Gray

President

Print Name

Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
<i>Example Row— shows an example of criterion (B)(1) for the State agency that oversees state-funded preschool, IDEA, and Head Start Collab Office</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-funded preschool • IDEA preschool special ed • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Representatives from each program are sitting on the state committee to define statewide QRIS program standards</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)		
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)	Board of Regents	-Adopt Early Learning and Development Standards as part of curriculum.
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)	Board of Regents	-Agree to release faculty time to participate in the new Early Childhood Professional Development Consortium -Responsible for strengthening articulation agreements between 2 and 4 year institutions around Early Childhood credits -Responsible for creating articulation agreements to accept competency based professional development as credit when delivered by an approved PD provider
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

 Signature (*Authorized Representative of Lead Agency*)

Date

(b)(6)

 Signature (*Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency*)

Date

10-15-13

PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood ("Lead Agency") and Charter Oak State College ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

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- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6) _____ 10.11.13
Signature Date

Myra Jones-Taylor Executive Director
Print Name Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6) _____ 10/10/13
Signature Date

Ed Klonoski President
Print Name Title

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(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)		
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)	Charter Oak State College	Will collaborate with the OEC to manage the Connecticut Credit Assessment Program to assess specific competency-based non-credit professional development to determine a credit worth for acceptance at colleges within an articulation cohort.
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10/10/13

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- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

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V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10/11/13

Myra Jones-Taylor

Executive Director

Print Name

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10/9/13

Elaine Zimmerman

Executive Director

Print Name

Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
<i>Example Row— shows an example of criterion (B)(1) for the State agency that oversees state- funded preschool, IDEA, and Head Start Collab Office</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-funded preschool • IDEA preschool special ed • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Representatives from each program are sitting on the state committee to define statewide QRIS program standards</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)	Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)	-Will collaborate with OEC to integrate ConneCT to Quality (C2Q) rating system and related information into the PLTI curriculum -Will participate in information dissemination to families about C2Q system and specific ratings so that families know how to select quality programs
(B)(4)	Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)	- Will collaborate with OEC regarding dissemination of information about C2Q system including participation of staff in training and engagement of families
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10/9/13

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood (“Lead Agency”) and Department of Children and Families (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as to articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;

4) Is generally familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application through a summary provided by the Lead Agency and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;

5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan);

6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant that have been provided through a summary, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485; and

7) Will negotiate in good faith with the Lead Agency regarding details not spelled out in this MOU, including but not limited to, the production of data, confidentiality requirements, distribution of grant funds and modification to existing Participating Agency contracts, if applicable.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan and summarized as identical to the current governance structure for early childhood education and set forth in the Governor's Executive Order #35;

- 3) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education (“ED”), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”); and
- 4) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency’s Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency’s Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State’s application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency’s status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency’s Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY’S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which will consist of initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10.11.13

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor

Executive Director

Print Name

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10/10/13

Joette Katz

Commissioner

Print Name

Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
<i>Example Row— shows an example of criterion (B)(1) for the State agency that oversees state- funded preschool, IDEA, and Head Start Collab Office</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-funded preschool • IDEA preschool special ed • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Representatives from each program are sitting on the state committee to define statewide QRIS program standards</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(4)	DCF Regional Offices	Support OEC efforts to provide information to DCF social workers regarding the new ConneCT to Quality rating system and how they can assist families to make informed decisions about selection of quality care for their children.

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10/11/13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10/10/13

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood (“Lead Agency”) and Department of Developmental Services (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)	<u>10.11.13</u>
Signature	Date
Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor	Executive Director
Print Name	Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)	<u>10.3.2013</u>
Signature	Date
Dr. Terrence W. Macy	Commissioner
Print Name	Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
<i>Example Row— shows an example of criterion (B)(1) for the State agency that oversees state-funded preschool, IDEA, and Head Start Collab Office</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-funded preschool IDEA preschool special ed Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Representatives from each program are sitting on the state committee to define statewide QRIS program standards</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)	Birth to Three Program	-Responsible for insuring that case managers participate in training related to ConneCT to Quality (C2Q) rating system -Responsible for insuring that case workers participate in training related to best practice strategies in reaching families and informing them on the importance of quality childcare
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10.3.2013

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood ("Lead Agency") and Department of Public Health ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6) _____ 10.11.13
Signature Date

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor _____ Executive Director
Print Name Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6) _____ 10/11/13
Signature Date

Dr. Jewel Mullen _____ Commissioner
Print Name Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(B)(1)	Childcare Licensing	-Childcare Licensing is a Bureau in the Depart. of Public Health (DPH) that will be transferred to OEC effective July 1, 2014. The terms and conditions of the agreement between OEC and DPH related to the transition of the Bureau are defined in the executed MOU between both agencies discussed in Section A-3
(B)(2)	Childcare Licensing	Childcare Licensing is a Bureau in the Depart. of Public Health (DPH) that will be transferred to OEC effective July 1, 2014. The terms and conditions of the agreement between OEC and DPH related to the transition of the Bureau are defined in the executed MOU between both agencies discussed in Section A-3
(B)(3)	Childcare Licensing	- Childcare Licensing is a Bureau in the Depart. of Public Health (DPH) that will be transferred to OEC effective July 1, 2014. The terms and conditions of the agreement between OEC and DPH related to the transition of the Bureau are defined in the executed MOU between both agencies discussed in Section A-3
(B)(4)	Childcare Licensing	- Childcare Licensing is a Bureau in the Depart. of Public Health (DPH) that will be transferred to OEC effective July 1, 2014. The terms and conditions of the agreement between OEC and DPH related to the transition of the Bureau are defined in the executed MOU between both agencies discussed in Section A-3
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

10.11.13

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

(b)(6)

10/11/13

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood ("Lead Agency") and Department of Social Services ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);

- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education (“ED”), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”);
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency’s Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency’s Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State’s application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency’s status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency’s Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY’S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES**Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:**

Signature	Date
<u>Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor</u>	<u>Executive Director</u>
Print Name	Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)	<u>Deputy Commissioner</u>	<u>10/9/13</u>
Signature	Date	
<i>for</i>		
<u>Roderick L. Bremby</u>	<u>Commissioner</u>	
Print Name	Title	

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
<i>Example Row— shows an example of criterion (B)(1) for the State agency that oversees state- funded preschool, IDEA, and Head Start Collab Office</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-funded preschool • IDEA preschool special ed • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Representatives from each program are sitting on the state committee to define statewide QRIS program standards</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)	DSS/Programs and Services	- CCDF allocations and related program supports will be transferred to the OEC as of July 1, 2014. Please refer to the executed MOA between Department of Social Services and the Office of Early Childhood and discussed in Section A-3
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)	DSS Regional offices	-Responsible for insuring that case workers participate in training related to ConneCT to Quality (C2Q) rating system -Responsible for insuring that case workers participate in training related to best practice strategies in reaching families and informing them on the importance of quality childcare
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10/11/13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

Deputy Commissioner 10/9/13

for RLB Commissioner

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES**Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:**

(b)(6)

10-11-13

Date

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor

Print Name

Executive Director

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)

10/9/13

Date

Kathleen M. Brennan

Print Name

Deputy Commissioner

Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(1)		
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(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

Deputy Commissioner 10/9/13

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood ("Lead Agency") and the Early Childhood Cabinet ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10.11.13

MYRA JONES-TAYLOR

Print Name

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DEC

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10/09/2013

Leah Grenier

Print Name

Chairperson, Early Childhood Cabinet

Title

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood (“Lead Agency”) and Eastern Connecticut State University (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
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D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

Myra Jones-Taylor

Executive Director

Print Name

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

Dr. Elsa Núñez

President

Print Name

Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)		
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)	Eastern Connecticut State University	Conduct needs assessment to identify early childhood training resources currently available; determine materials that would be most useful to center and home-based providers; and to develop video-enhance technical assistance modules based up the results of this needs assessment
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10/10/13

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood ("Lead Agency") and Head Start Collaboration Office ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
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- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State's application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel ("Participating State Agency Plan") in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
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initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

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V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

10.11.13

Date

Myra Jones-Taylor, Executive Director

Print Name

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

10-9-13

Date

Grace-Ann Caruso Whitney, Director

Print Name

Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)		
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)		
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10-9-13

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood (“Lead Agency”) and Office of Higher Education (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
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 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with the Participating State Agency and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
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- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
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III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

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V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10.11.13

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor

Executive Director

Print Name

Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)

Signature

Date

10/11/13

Jane Ciarleglio

Executive Director

Print Name

Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
<i>Example Row— shows an example of criterion (B)(1) for the State agency that oversees state- funded preschool, IDEA, and Head Start Collab Office</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-funded preschool IDEA preschool special ed Head Start Collab Office 	Representatives from each program are sitting on the state committee to define statewide QRIS program standards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Start Collab Office 	Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)		
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)	Office of Higher Education	-Agree to adopt standards as part of Early Childhood curriculum.
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)	Office of Higher Education	-Agree to release faculty time to participate in the new Early Childhood Professional Development Consortium -Responsible for strengthening articulation agreements between 2 and 4 year institutions around Early Childhood credits -Responsible for creating articulation agreements to accept competency based professional development as credit when delivered by an approved PD provider
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

(b)(6)

IV. APPLICATION ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS
Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge
(CFDA No. 84.412)

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Governor Dannel P. Malloy	Applicant's Mailing Address: Executive Chambers State Capital Hartford, CT 06106
Employer Identification Number: 06-6000798	Organizational DUNS: <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content;">(b)(4)</div>
Lead Agency: Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Contact Name: Myra Jones-Taylor, Executive Director	Lead Agency Contact Phone: 860-713-6411 Lead Agency Contact Email Address: <u>Myra.Jones-taylor@ct.gov</u>
Required Applicant Signatures <i>(Must include signatures from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. Insert additional signature blocks as needed below. To simplify the process, signatories may sign on separate Application Assurance forms.):</i> To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct. I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:	
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Governor Dannel P. Malloy	Telephone: 860-566-4840
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date:
Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Myra Jones-Taylor, Executive Director	Agency Name: Office of Early Childhood
Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:

Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Stefan Pryor, Commissioner	Agency Name: Connecticut State Department of Education
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Dr. Jewel Mullen, Commissioner	Agency Name: Connecticut Department of Public Health
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Terrence W. Macy, Commissioner	Agency Name: Connecticut Department of Developmental Services
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Roderick L. Bremby, Commissioner	Agency Name: Connecticut Department of Social Services
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Joette Katz, Commissioner	Agency Name: Connecticut Department of Children and Families
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood (“Lead Agency”) and State Department of Education (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98 and 99), and the suspension and debarment regulations in 2 CFR Part 3485.

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

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- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

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- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
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- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
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If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6) _____ 10.11.13
Signature Date

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor _____ Executive Director
Print Name Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6) _____ 10/11/13
Signature Date

Stefan Pryor _____ Commissioner
Print Name Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

The Participating State Agency hereby agrees to participate in the State Plan, as described in the State's application, and more specifically commits to undertake the tasks and activities described in detail below.

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(B)(1)		Work collaboratively with the OEC to develop a plan and process for a multi-year phase-in of licensing requirements for public pre-K programs. Explore alternative licensing requirements for public school pre-K programs
(B)(2)		Offer financial incentives to public schools for facility improvements to meet licensing requirements as they are developed.
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)	Bureau of Special Education	Continue to provide preschool IDEA funding to support the achievement of NAEYC accreditation in programs serving children ages 3 to 5 with disabilities
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)	Academic Office	Promote the understanding and implementation of new B-5 early learning and development standards in public Pre-K programs and K classrooms; Engage community of early childhood program providers in PD related to development of early literacy skills
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)	Talent Office	Participate in the Early Childhood Professional Development Consortia
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)	Bureau of Information Technology	Include KEA data in SLDS; Maintain portal to share results of KEA
	Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation	Maintain administration of KEA data collection
	Academic Office	Collaborate with OEC to provide PD for Kindergarten Entry Coordinators (KECs) on KEA administration; Provide periodic recalibration and training for KECs
(E)(2)		

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
(P)(4)	Turn Around Office: Bureau of Accountability and Improvement	Participate in OEC/SDE partnership for Prek - grade 3 Institute for Alliance Districts Offer elementary principals participation in P-3 Executive Leadership Program in collaboration with UCONN

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10/11/13

XIII. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MODEL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

(Appendix C of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Notice Inviting Applications)

Background for Memorandum of Understanding

Each Participating State Agency identified in a State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) State Plan is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement with the State's Lead Agency that specifies the scope of the work that will be implemented by the Participating State Agency. The purpose of the MOU or other binding agreement is to define a relationship between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency that is specific to the RTT-ELC competition; the MOU or other binding agreement is not meant to detail all typical aspects of grant coordination or administration.

To support States in working efficiently with their Participating State Agencies to affirm each Participating State Agency's participation in the State Plan, ED and HHS have produced a model MOU, which is attached. This model MOU may serve as a template for States; however, States are not required to use it. States may use a document other than the model MOU, as long as it includes the key features noted below and in the model MOU. States should consult with their State attorneys on what is most appropriate. States may allow multiple Participating State Agencies to sign a single MOU or other binding agreement, with customized exhibits for each Participating State Agency, if the State so chooses.

At a minimum, an RTT-ELC MOU or other binding agreement should include the following key features, each of which is described in detail below and exemplified in the attached model MOU: (i) terms and conditions; (ii) a scope of work; and, (iii) authorized signatures.

(i) Terms and conditions: Each Participating State Agency must sign a standard set of terms and conditions that includes, at a minimum, key roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency; State recourse for non-performance by the Participating State Agency; and assurances that make clear what the Participating State Agency is agreeing to do.

(ii) Scope of work: RTT-ELC MOUs or other binding agreements must include a preliminary scope of work (included in the model RTT-ELC MOU as Exhibit I) that is completed by each Participating State Agency. The scope of work must be signed and dated by an authorized Participating State Agency official and an authorized Lead Agency official. In the interest of time and in consideration of the effort it will take for the Lead Agency and Participating State Agencies to develop detailed work plans for RTT-ELC, the scope of work submitted by Participating State Agencies and Lead Agencies as part of a State's application may be preliminary. Preliminary scopes of work must, at a minimum, identify all applicable

portions of the State Plan that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement and include the required assurances. (Note that in order for a State to be eligible for the RTT-ELC competition, the Lead Agency must have executed with each Participating State Agency an MOU or other binding agreement, which the State must attach to its application and which must describe the Participating State Agency's level of participation in the grant and must include the required assurances.)

If a State is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, Participating State Agencies will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work, which must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with each Participating State Agency's preliminary scope of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the Participating State Agencies' specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel.

(iii) Authorized Signatures: The signatures on the MOU or other binding agreement demonstrate an acknowledgement of the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency. With respect to the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency, the Lead Agency's counter-signature on the MOU or other binding agreement indicates that the Participating State Agency's commitment is consistent with the requirement that a Participating State Agency implement all applicable portions of the State Plan.

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into by and between Office of Early Childhood ("Lead Agency") and University of Connecticut ("Participating State Agency"). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

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The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

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- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
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 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
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V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

(b)(6)	<u>10.11.13</u>
Signature	Date
<u>Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor</u>	<u>Executive Director</u>
Print Name	Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

(b)(6)	<u>10/10/13</u>
Signature	Date
<u>Sally M. Reis</u>	<u>Vice Provost for Academic Affairs</u>
Print Name	Title

EXHIBIT I – PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY SCOPE OF WORK

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start Collab Office 	<i>Responsible for cross-walking Head Start performance standards with the new Program Standards</i>
(B)(1)		
(B)(2)		
(B)(3)		
(B)(4)		
(B)(5)		
(C)(1)	The A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UConn Health Center)	-Develop written guidance and training modules regarding implementation of the Early Learning and Development Standards and aligned assessment tools with children with disabilities and dual language learners
(C)(2)		
(C)(3)		
(C)(4)		
(D)(1)		
(D)(2)		
(E)(1)		
(E)(2)		

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Lead Agency)

Date

10.11.13

(b)(6)

Signature (Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency)

Date

10/10/13

(b)(6)

APPENDIX 3 LETTERS OF SUPPORT

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Dannel P. Malloy
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
United State Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
United State Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Re: Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius:

Over three years as Governor, I have made improving the educational and health outcomes of young children with high needs a top priority. Together with the Connecticut General Assembly, Connecticut added 1000 more spaces to our state pre-kindergarten program School Readiness, and after a planning period, we established the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to administer a comprehensive, coordinated system of early childhood services and supports for children from birth to age five. Connecticut is making progress; however, there remains much work to do.

Connecticut's reality remains that one in four children enters Kindergarten without the skills, knowledge, and behaviors, needed to succeed – reducing their chances of reaching their educational potential and contributing to the worst achievement gap of any state in the country. With Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant application, we ambitiously seek to achieve a 50% increase in the percentage of children with high needs who are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs prior to Kindergarten and who, therefore, will enter Kindergarten ready to succeed.

Connecticut has invested billions of dollars in early childhood programs over the years, but educational outcomes for our most vulnerable young children have not significantly improved. We have created excellent programs that reach some children during some of their early years, but we continue to work towards an integrated, comprehensive system that reaches every high-need child in every setting.

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Governor.Malloy@ct.gov

That is why, in June of this year, upon the Connecticut General Assembly providing funding, I created by Executive Order, the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) as a cabinet-level agency reporting directly to me. Within a few short weeks of signing the Executive Order, the OEC began the integration of state programs that center on young children. Three programs have been transferred from other state agencies, and we anticipate two additional programs will move to the OEC as well. Through this new governance structure, we will transform the early childhood education paradigm to improve academic outcomes for children and their caregivers. While Connecticut undertakes our proposed Race to the Top projects to further develop our comprehensive system of early childhood care and education, we have already taken steps to ensure that our Head Start programs continue to be available to children with high needs even during periods of federal government shut down.

Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) proposal will enable Connecticut to accelerate ongoing efforts to strengthen our state system, including the implementation of the ConneCT to Quality (C2Q), our tiered quality rating and improvement system, and, the complementary technical assistance network and professional development system that will further enhance the capacity of Connecticut's dedicated early childhood workforce. Our proposal builds upon years of investment and planning, but at the same time represents a dramatic shift in the way our state coordinates its federal, state, and local resources to produce brighter futures for our children. Only through improved service coordination, integration of early care learning and development standards, and quality improvements included in our RTT-ELC proposal will Connecticut be able to achieve our goal of accelerating the increase in the number of high needs children who will be enrolled in high quality care and learning settings.

There is no doubt that a talented workforce is critical to our future. Developing a talent pipeline requires investment across the educational continuum, but most importantly, demands a commitment to invest in the education, health and well-being of our youngest children. Connecticut has made that commitment. That is why I am proud to present to you Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application. Our RTT-ELC proposal aligns with my agenda to improve health, development and educational outcomes for young children, to reduce the achievement gap, and to build a world-class workforce. At its core our RTT-ELC proposal reflects Connecticut's belief in our fundamental responsibility to provide an opportunity for all children to succeed.

Sincerely,



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor, State of Connecticut

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



EDUCATION COMMITTEE
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LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
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(860) 240-0420
FAX: (860) 240-0023

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We write to express the strong, bipartisan support of the Connecticut General Assembly's Education Committee for our state's proposed Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's robust RTT-ELC proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to strengthen state systems to better meet the needs of young children and their families.

Of the 210,000 children under the age of five in Connecticut, approximately 60,000 have high needs (i.e., low income, developmental delays, and language barriers). Despite current efforts, approximately one out of four children in our state enters Kindergarten with skills, knowledge, and behavior that are below expectations - which puts them at an immediate disadvantage in reaching their educational potential. The Education Committee is committed to improving early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative.

Through our bipartisan work on the Education Committee, we have helped build the foundation for early learning and development that RTT-ELC will enhance – including, most recently, designing Connecticut's first Office of Early Childhood. This new office was developed thanks to passage of Public Act No. 11-181, *An Act Concerning Early Childhood Education and the Establishment of a Coordinated System of Early Care and Education and Child Development*. This law required creation of a system to consolidate existing, disparate early childhood education and child care programs and services for children from birth to age eight - establishing a coordinated system that strives to:

- Reduce the academic achievement gap
- Increase participation in early childhood education programs
- Increase parental engagement, family literacy, and parenting skills
- Increase oral language development and social competence; and
- Decrease special education placements.

These elements in Public Act 11-181 and the new Office of Early Childhood serve as the bedrock for the RTT-ELC initiatives that enhance the best components of our existing state and local systems while building capacity, increasing coordination, and bridging gaps to more fully support young children and their families through high-quality initiatives.

The Education Committee is pleased that Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal will strengthen inter-agency cooperation and data sharing protocols to help us better monitor how early care services meet the needs of Connecticut's children. The creation of a well-integrated tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System ConneCT to Quality (C2Q), increased access to health and mental health consultants to assist family child care and family, friend and neighbor caregivers, and enhanced technical assistance and a professional development system for the early childhood workforce will all result in higher quality and more accessible early childhood care and education services for children and their families.

We are also pleased with the intention to systematize and track developmental screening for all young children. These goals directly align with those of the General Assembly's Joint Committee on Education - which aims to pass a bill in our coming legislative session to put these and other key elements of the Office of Early Childhood into state statute.

It is for these reasons that we, as leaders of the Education Committee, fully endorse Connecticut's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application and look forward to supporting its successful implementation.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this initiative that is so critical to the future success of young children in our state.

Sincerely,



Andrew M. Fleischmann (D), State Representative, 18th District, Co-Chair, Education Committee



Andrea L. Stillman (D), State Senator, 20th District, Co-Chair, Education Committee



Toni Boucher (R), State Senator, 26th District, Ranking Member, Education Committee



Tim Ackert (R), State Representative, 8th District, Ranking Member, Education Committee

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 3000
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

October 11, 2013

Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius:

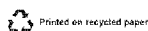
The Connecticut General Assembly's Public Health Committee is pleased to support Connecticut's proposed Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. If funded, this application will improve the quality of learning and development, as well as physical and mental health outcomes for Connecticut's children.

The Committee has cognizance of all programs and matters relating to the Department of Public Health; the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Department of Developmental Services; The Office of Health Care Access; and all other matters relating to health. We are deeply committed to health and safety of Connecticut's children, and have been integrally involved in developing some of the key health and mental health systems and standards that Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative will build upon and enhance.

We are pleased that the RTT-ELC will add health, mental health and developmental screening with the addition of health coaches and mental health consultants to the regional quality improvement centers to assist Family Child Care and Family, Friends and Neighbor providers. It is also vital to systematize and track developmental screening for all young children. These steps are crucial to ensuring that young children in Connecticut are receiving the benefits of early intervention and health support along the way.

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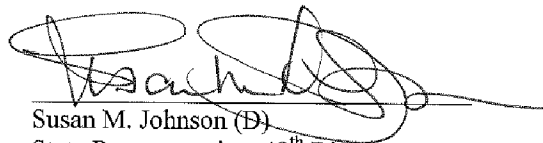


Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application reflects a highly collaborative planning process. The proposed RTT-ELC project will achieve its ambitious goals by accelerating existing efforts to strengthen state systems and supporting communities to work collaboratively to better meet the needs of children and families through improved service coordination, integration of early care learning and development standards, and quality improvements.

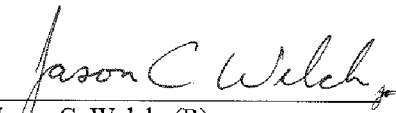
We, the undersigned leaders of the Connecticut General Assembly's Public Health Committee, fully endorse Connecticut's Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge application and look forward to supporting its successful implementation.



Honorable Terry B. Gerratana (D)
State Senator, 6th District
Co-Chair, Public Health Committee



Susan M. Johnson (D)
State Representative, 49th District
Co-Chair, Public Health Committee

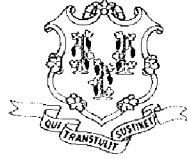


Jason C. Welch, (R)
State Senator, 31st District
Ranking Member, Public Health Committee



Prasad Srinivasan (R),
State Representative, 31st District
Ranking Member, Public Health Committee

**State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**



HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG. ROOM 2000
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
240-0490

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Arne Duncan
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington DC 20202

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington DC 20201

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius,

The Connecticut General Assembly's Human Services Committee strongly supports Connecticut's proposed Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. If funded, this application will improve the quality of learning and development, better preparing Connecticut's children for lifelong academic and employment success.

Of the 210,000 children ages 0 to 5 in Connecticut, some 60,000 have high needs (e.g. low income, developmental delays, and language barriers, etc.) Despite our current efforts, roughly one out of four children enters Kindergarten with skills, knowledge, and behaviors below expectations – placing them at a disadvantage to reach their educational potential. The Human Services Committee is committed to helping protect these children and ensure their needs are properly met.

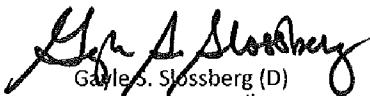
The Committee has cognizance of all matters relating to the Department of Social Services and the Department of Children and Families, including institutions under their jurisdiction; the Office of Child Day Care; The Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, among others. In this role, we have developed many of the policies and systems that will serve as the foundation of early childhood care and education that Connecticut's RTT-ELC application will advance.

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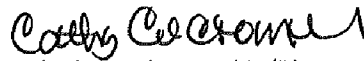
Both of the primary agencies (DSS and DCF) that relate to the efforts of our Committee will play central roles in the successful implementation of RTT-ELC projects.

The Human Services Committee is pleased with this RTT-ELC proposal including the creation of a well-integrated tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System ConneCT to Quality (C2Q), increased access to health and mental health consultants to assist family child care and family, friend and neighbor caregivers, and enhanced technical assistance and a professional development system for the early childhood workforce will all result in higher quality and more accessible early childhood care and education services for children and their families. We are also pleased with the intention to systematize and track developmental screening for all young children. These goals directly coincide with the interests of the Human Services Committee.

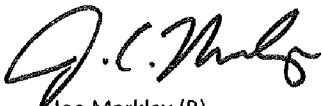
We, the undersigned leaders of the Connecticut General Assembly's Human Services Committee, fully endorse Connecticut's Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge application and look forward to supporting its successful implementation.



Gayle S. Slossberg (D)
State Senator, 14th District,
Co-Chair, Human Services Committee



Catherine F. Abercrombie (D)
State Representative, 83rd District
Co-Chair, Human Services Committee



Joe Markley (R)
State Senator, 16th District
Ranking Member, Human Services Committee



Terrie Wood
(R) State Representative, 141st District
Ranking Member, Human Services Committee

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Co-Chairs
Senator Dante Bartolomeo
Representative Diana Urban



State Capitol, Room 011
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591
860-240-0370

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

October 11, 2013

Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius,

The Connecticut General Assembly's Committee on Children supports Connecticut's proposed Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application to increase the number of children with high needs who are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs throughout our state.

The Committee on Children is committed to having all Connecticut children grow up in stable environments, safe, healthy, and ready to lead successful lives. We are pleased that Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal will strengthen inter-agency cooperation and stronger data sharing protocols to help us better monitor how early care services are meeting the needs of Connecticut's children. **As the committee of the General Assembly statutorily authorized to maintain an annual report card that evaluates the progress of state policies and programs, we look forward to aligning and expanding our report card indicators as they relate to improving early learning and development systems and supports for Connecticut children and their families.**

The creation of a well-integrated tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System ConneCT to Quality (C2Q), along with increased access to health and mental health consultants to assist family child care and family, friend and neighbor caregivers, and enhanced technical assistance and a professional development system for the early childhood workforce will all result in higher quality and more accessible early childhood care and education services for children and their families. We are also pleased with the intention to systematize and track developmental

screening for all young children. These goals directly coincide with the interests of the Committee on Children.

This year, we spearheaded the passage of PA 13-178 An Act Concerning the Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Health of Youths. This groundbreaking legislation, among many things, requires the Office of Early Childhood to collaborate with State Department of Education and other departments, to design and implement a public information and education campaign on children's mental, emotional, and behavioral health issues. We believe this work is crucial to enable our youngsters to thrive and is a compliment to the work embodied in Connecticut's Race to the Top application.

The planning process for Connecticut's RTT-ELC application has resulted in ambitious goals that will be achieved by accelerating existing efforts to strengthen state systems through improved service coordination, integration of early care learning and development standards, and quality improvements to better meet the needs of children and families.

The Committee on Children is a champion of early childhood education and care, as such we, the undersigned chairs of the Connecticut General Assembly's Children Committee, endorse Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application and look forward to supporting its successful implementation.

Sincerely,



Dante Bartolomeo (D), State Senator, 13th District, Co-Chair, Committee on Children



Diana Urban (D), State Representative, 43rd District, Co-Chair, Committee on Children



State of Connecticut

HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 1800
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SENATOR BETH BYE
CO-CHAIR

REPRESENTATIVE ROBERTA B. WILLIS
CO-CHAIR

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius,

The Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee strongly supports Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. If funded, this program will greatly strengthen our ability to provide high quality education opportunities for our young children.

It is increasingly clear that successful early learning programs are crucial for children's educational development. This is particularly true for high needs students who struggle with poverty, disabilities or language barriers that require special attention. The varying and often unknown quality of Connecticut's early education and development programs contributes to our state's achievement gap, and hinders our efforts to identify and provide assistance for our most vulnerable students.

Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal will address this issue by creating Connect to Quality, a rating and improvement system that provides a statewide technical assistance network and professional development network for early childhood workforce. The establishment of this rating system and the accompanying dissemination of Early Learning Standards and Core Knowledge Competencies, will improve the overall quality of Connecticut's early education programs while increasing the number of high needs children enrolled in them.

The Higher Education Committee has helped to lay the groundwork for this proposal by assisting with the development of Connecticut's first Office of Early Childhood, and through legislation that empowers our higher education institutions to improve the quality and coordination of their early childhood curricula. The most notable examples of this legislation are:

- PA 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform approved funding for 1,000 new spaces in school readiness programs. Half of these spaces must be located in educational reform districts, while the other half are split equally between (1) other priority and former priority districts and (2) competitive districts, which are districts not included in either of the other two categories but that are either among the 50 poorest

in the state or have one or more schools with high concentrations of low-income students. Additionally, this act allocated up to \$80,000 of any unspent funds appropriated for new school readiness spaces to the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority to update its 2008 study of the space and facilities needed to implement access to universal early childhood education for all three- and four-year-olds in the state.

- In addition, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted Public Act 11-181, *An Act Concerning Early Childhood Education and the Establishment of a Coordinated System of Early Care and Education and Child Development*. This Act sets the framework on which Connecticut's RTT-ELC Plan was established – so as to ensure many more children enter Kindergarten ready to succeed. The Act requires building a coordinated system that consolidates existing early childhood education and child care programs and services for children from birth to age eight into a coordinated system that strives to: reduce the academic achievement gap; increase participation in early childhood education programs; increase parental engagement, family literacy and parenting skills; increase oral language development and social competence; and decrease special education placements.
- Also, the Connecticut General Assembly recently enacted Public Act 11-54, *An Act Concerning Requirements for Early Childhood Educators*, which makes several changes to strengthen the required qualifications for early childhood educators.

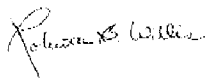
Connecticut's current Race to the Top application is our most robust attempt yet to overcome the barriers that prevent our high needs students from achieving their full potential. We are confident that the application of this plan will greatly improve the quality of programs currently serving high needs children, and will provide them with more comprehensive assistance than ever before.

The undersigned leaders of the Connecticut General Assembly's Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, fully endorse Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application and look forward to its successful implementation. Thank you for your consideration of this critical initiative, and for your support in helping to improve the quality of education for children in our state.


Sincerely,



Beth Bye (D), State Senator, 5th District, Co-Chair, Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee



Roberta B. Willis (D), State Representative, 64th District, Co-Chair, Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee



Toni Boucher (R), State Senator, 26th District, Ranking Member, Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee



University of Connecticut
Office of the President

Susan Herbst
President

October 10, 2013

The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
State of Connecticut
State Capitol, Room 202
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

I am delighted to support the Connecticut application for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This early childhood program will provide a foundation for success for more Connecticut children. During your governorship, you have been a leader in the expansion of services to this age group and your support for this proposal is critical as it focuses on the expansion and enhancement of quality early childhood programs for high need infants and young children with disabilities and who are English language learners.

I have read the grant abstract and outline of the activities the CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is proposing to accomplish in this grant application, and believe it to be an exemplary proposal. If awarded, this grant will have a critical impact on both the Connecticut early childhood service system and on the infants and young children who will benefit from increased access to quality programs. I am most impressed with the goal to increase by 50% the number of high needs infants and young children enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs across all types of settings (home-based, centers and schools). While all children need high quality early learning and development programs to reach their full potential, it is imperative that high needs children, in particular, have access to these types of services.

This effort will have the support of the University of Connecticut, and I fully endorse the memorandum of agreement signed by our Provost on behalf of the University of Connecticut's A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UConn UCEDD). The UConn UCEDD has an international reputation for its work with infants, young children and their families, and its director and staff has worked closely with the early childhood team at the CT Department of Education over many years. In fact, key OEC staff are on the UConn UCEDD advisory board. I am delighted that this effort will extend and formalize our

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The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
October 10, 2013
Page 2

relationship and enable us to assist the State in our efforts in the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant for high needs infants and young children.

The UConn UCEDD is a University Center that is administered jointly by the Provost and the School of Medicine. As such, it is affiliated with all schools and campuses at UConn. The center is one of 69 in a network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCEDD) authorized by the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and funded through the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. Its mission is to work collaboratively in Connecticut to promote advocacy, capacity building and systems change to improve the quality of life for a person with a disability across their life span. This mission meets the needs of the target population of the proposed Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, and we look forward to collaboratively working on the objectives and activities focused on high needs infants and children and their families: those with disabilities, at risk for disability and who are English language learners. We are delighted to partner with other state organizations and offer our support to this critically important initiative.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Susan Herbst



**University of Connecticut Health Center
A.J. Pappanikou Center for Developmental Disabilities**

October 11, 2013

Myra Jones-Taylor
Executive Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Ave. Room G29
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Director Jones-Taylor,

On behalf of the University of Connecticut A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UConn UCEDD), I am delighted to support the CT application for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant to the U.S. Department of Education. We look forward to collaboratively working on the objectives and activities focused on high infants and children and their families: those with disabilities, at risk for disability and who are English language learners. We have had a long history of meeting the needs of this population, and we have been privileged to work with your staff over many years to do so. I am delighted that we will have an MOU to formalize this relationship and we look forward to working with you when you get funded. We anticipate assisting you in a number of areas you have identified as important as you build high quality systems and programs for learners with high needs

The UConn UCEDD is a University Center administered jointly by Provost's office, and the School of Medicine at the University of CT. As such, it is affiliated with all schools and campuses at UConn. The center is one of 69 centers in a network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCEDD) authorized by the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and funded through the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. The Center's work, as a university-based center on disability, ensures that individuals with disability and those at risk for disability, representing all racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, are fully included and valued in society. The mission of the center is to work collaboratively in the state to promote advocacy, capacity building and systems change to improve the quality of life for a person with a disability across the life span and their family. Of particular importance to this proposal is the graduate training we offer in the area of high risk infants and young children, and the work we have done with family engagement in their child's learning. We are most pleased that your target population of children includes those most vulnerable. While all children need high quality early learning and development programs to reach their full potential, it is imperative that high needs children, in particular, have access to these types of programs.

I am very impressed with the process you used to determine the goals you are pursuing, and the resulting application is strong and focused on measurable outcomes for the state of CT and other states that will learn from the implementation process used in CT. Thank you for allowing us to participate with you in this exciting endeavor.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Mary Beth Bruder, PhD

Professor of Pediatrics and Educational Psychology
Director, University of Connecticut A.J. Pappanikou
Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
Education, Research, and Service
263 Farmington Avenue, Mail Code 6222
Farmington, CT 06030
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EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

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Office of the President

October 9, 2013

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor
Executive Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Room G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Dr. Jones-Taylor:

I am writing in support of the State of Connecticut's application for a federal Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant.

I would like to commend you, Governor Dannel Malloy, and other state leaders for your commitment to the goal of increasing the placement of high need children in quality preschool environments by 50 percent. The stakes for these children are high, and the long-term impact that early childhood education can have on their futures cannot be overstated. At the same time that the child poverty rates in New Haven and Hartford are 38 percent and more than 50 percent respectively, research has shown that children with preschool educational experiences are 30 percent more likely to graduate from high school and twice as likely to attend college. The educational continuum starts at the toddler age; anything our state can do to provide more at-risk and high need children with quality preschool education has the potential of transforming the life of every child we reach. As former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton noted in a recent address at the Yale Law School, "If you want to know the moral and economic health of a community, look at the children."

For English Language Learners, the issue of early childhood literacy—a problem that the State of Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal addresses specifically—is another barrier we must seek to overcome. National research shows that a child without English proficiency who enters first grade is a year behind his peers when he walks through the schoolhouse door. In Willimantic, home of Eastern Connecticut State University, it is estimated that more than two-thirds of the K-12 population is Latino. The issue of early childhood literacy is one that our town, the school system, and our University deal with on a daily basis, so I am pleased that the RTT-ELC proposal includes strategies to address the problem.

In reviewing Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal, I find five planning elements that I believe—when implemented in concert—will create a comprehensive and effective system for reaching the goal of increasing the participation of high need children in quality preschool education programs.

Screening children with special needs. With finite resources at the state and local school district levels, it will be critical to identify children with the greatest need and enroll them and their families in early childhood education programs as quickly as possible. Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal does that.

Creating a technical assistance network for early childhood providers. Eastern Connecticut State University graduates more early childhood educators than any other college or university in Connecticut. Our Early Childhood Education faculty and the staff at our Child and Family Development Resource Center (CFDRC) work closely with early childhood education providers—public and private, in-state and beyond—to provide a range of professional assistance, including best practices delivered through state-of-the-art video and distance learning technology. In the context of preparing our students for early childhood education careers, the CFDRC is a learning laboratory where upwards of 90 children from toddler age to age 5 are provided a safe, nurturing, and educational

environment. Since 2006, we have gained an expert understanding of the issues and challenges confronting family daycare and preschool providers. The State of Connecticut's plan to create a technical assistance network will bring together and leverage the expertise found at Eastern, at other Connecticut colleges and universities, and at various state and local agencies to provide a powerful resource for the people working with high need children in early childhood education environments.

Enhancing professional development for early childhood education providers. State and national data continue to show deficiencies in the skill sets of childcare providers, whether in institutional settings or in home-based family daycare operations. As the field of early childhood education has advanced, the need to develop the professional skills of providers in the areas of socialization, language acquisition, cognitive development, the role of play, and other important aspects of child development has been noted. A formal program of professional development for all early childhood educators in Connecticut is fundamental to improving the quality of the care and education provided to all preschool children.

Through training videos, workshops, conferences, and other means, Eastern's Early Childhood Education faculty and the CFDRRC staff share their expertise with early childhood education providers throughout the state and region. We would welcome opportunities to be part of your professional development planning.

Building on existing tools to create a statewide assessment system that ensures quality preschool education. Just as Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal includes tools and support for childcare and preschool programs, the system of assessment being proposed has clearly defined, professionally validated licensing and accreditation standards and evaluation mechanisms (i.e. site visits, self-assessment tools) to ensure that improvements in the quality of early childhood education in Connecticut can be measured. This will allow the State to allocate resources and recommend corrective actions so that continuous improvements in program quality can take place.

Strengthening linkages between early childhood educational programs and primary grade education. Education is a lifelong continuum, and establishing a positive path in a child's earliest years creates a foundation of success in future years. At-risk and high need children, especially English Language Learners (ELL), often lack the resources at home necessary to reinforce the educational gains made in the classroom. The RTT-ELC proposal's plans to link early childhood and primary grade education will increase parental involvement and family literacy programs. The success of increasing the involvement of parents of high need children in their education has been well documented (e.g. parent academies in Miami, Florida), and Eastern's Early Literacy program in the Windham Public School District has demonstrated the importance of teaching English to the parents of ELL students. The State of Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal also recognizes that educational success for high need children is linked to other social issues, and incorporates mental health, nutrition, and developmental screening and support into the plan. I am also pleased to see that funding would be made available for scholarships and other incentives to encourage parents to enroll their preschoolers in early childhood programs.

Eastern Connecticut State University applauds the State of Connecticut for creating an RTT-ELC proposal that incorporates these five strengths into its plan. But we do not intend to sit on the sidelines when this grant is approved and the plan is implemented. As an early childhood education leader in Connecticut, we are committed to supporting this program through a variety of resources.

For a number of years, the research arm of the Early Childhood Education Department—the Center for Early Childhood Education (CECE)—has been leveraging the expertise of our faculty and students and the research potential of the Child and Family Development Resource Center to provide expert testimony at legislative hearings;

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor
October 9, 2013
Page 3

publish scholarly articles on a host of related topics; host symposia and conferences; and serve on local and statewide advisory boards.

The CECE has also served as a regional resource for childcare providers, including production of an "e-clips" video series that has won several national Telly Awards. On the national stage, Eastern has conducted the nationally recognized TIMPANI Toy Study/Award Program (Toys that Inspire Mindful Play and Nurture Imagination) for the past four years to highlight the role that play serves in the cognitive, social, and personal development of young children.

Our Early Childhood Education faculty has also written internationally acclaimed textbooks on early childhood education. For these many reasons, Eastern is considered to be a state, regional, and national resource and we would be pleased to offer our services in support of the State's RTT-ELC program in any way that we can.

Eastern's experience as a local resource in the area of English Language Learning is another important way in which Eastern can contribute to the Race to the Top initiative. In Willimantic, with its sizable population of English Language Learners, early literacy and preschool development are issues that Eastern Connecticut State University's Early Childhood Education Department has long been interested in. From 2008-11, we conducted a three-year, \$4 million Early Reading First project, during which time preschool literacy instruction was delivered to more than 600 children in Willimantic, and professional development services provided to their teachers in Windham Public Schools. We are working with the school system to continue the momentum begun five years ago.

I also want to speak of the RTT-ELC's plans to focus statewide support of high need preschool children through the new Office of Early Childhood. Educators increasingly realize that the intellectual, social, and physical development of children begins before birth. The importance of prenatal nutrition has increasingly been noted by the scientific community. In addition, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data shows that while the mental acuity and motor skills of infants at six months is statistically identical across socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, by age two the cognitive and physical development of economically disadvantaged children starts to lag that of more affluent children. This "gap" widens throughout childhood, and is evidenced by NEAP academic testing at the fourth, eighth, and 12th grade levels.

Developing educational policies and funding initiatives primarily at the K-12 level ignores the fundamental need to start positive educational interventions for at-risk and high need children as early in their lives as possible. Focusing on those needs and creating the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood recognizes the importance of providing public advocacy for young children, while building a comprehensive preschool and early childhood education strategy that can be funded and supported by the General Assembly, the Governor's Office, and Connecticut residents.

We are excited to be able to work with a state office dedicated to our youngest learners, and enthusiastically endorse the State of Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposal. Please feel free to contact me should you have further questions.

Sincerely,
(b)(6)

Elsa M. Núñez
President

Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative

October 7, 2013

American Savings
Foundation

Children's Fund of
Connecticut

The Community
Foundation for Greater
New Haven

Community Foundation of
Greater New Britain

Connecticut Community
Foundation

Connecticut Network of
Community Foundations

Fairfield County
Community Foundation

The Fund for Greater
Hartford

William Caspar Graustein
Memorial Fund

The Grossman Family
Foundation

Hartford Foundation for
Public Giving

Liberty Bank Foundation

Emily Hall Tremaine
Foundation

Carol Schofield
Staff

Connecticut Early
Childhood Funders
Collaborative
c/o Connecticut Council for
Philanthropy
221 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860-525-5585
cschofield@ctphilanthropy.org

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Myra,

The Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative enthusiastically supports Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) funds

Connecticut grantmakers have been meeting to share their concerns and knowledge and to leverage their private-sector investments in early education and child development programs since 1994. A recent survey found that, over the past five years, 32 funders (most of them Council for Philanthropy member organizations) have provided more than \$76 million in support of efforts that have benefited children from birth through third grade and their families in Connecticut.

The Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, a joint effort of 14 Connecticut funders, was created in 2011 to provide support for development of a comprehensive system of early childhood care and education, and child development. The Collaborative invested \$175,000 toward the planning effort that resulted in the creation of the Office of Early Childhood. Connecticut Council for Philanthropy is a member of and serves as fiscal agent for the Collaborative.

Since the establishment of the Office of Early Childhood, members of the Collaborative have committed to continue their efforts and partnership with the State to create a dynamic, coordinated early childhood system that engages and responds to parents and communities and provides the best outcomes for all families.

The two major efforts proposed in Connecticut's application—Statewide Systems Building and High Quality for High Needs—will help ensure that more children receive high quality early care and education, more parents receive sound information to guide their choices and more providers receive support to enhance their skills and services.

The Collaborative believes all key areas of the application—quality, access and system building—are necessary components of an effective system that works for all children and families.

We have begun the process with the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a necessary first step. Both the public and private sectors must continue our focus and maintain our determination to ensure that all children and their families in Connecticut, especially children with high needs, receive the services they need and deserve.

RTT-ELC funding will play a major role in helping us to achieve our goals. Such a vote of confidence from the federal government will not only materially help Connecticut implement its strategies, but will also send the positive message that we are working to eliminate the state's "opportunity gap" before it adds to our well-documented "achievement gap."

We also anticipate that the influx of funding will increase interest among local funders in becoming a member of the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, which will mean increased private-sector investment in a comprehensive, effective early childhood system into the future.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Sarah Fabish, co-chair, Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative
Director of Grantmaking and Scholarships, Community Foundation for Greater New Haven

(b)(6)

Maggie Osborn, member, Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative
President, Connecticut Council for Philanthropy

WILLIAM CASPAR GRAUSTEIN
MEMORIAL FUND

October 9, 2013

David Nee
Executive Director

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106



*The storyteller figure
symbolizes the values
of the Memorial
Fund—educating,
supporting and
inspiring our
children.*

Dear Governor Malloy:

On behalf of the Discovery Communities across the state, this letter confirms the commitment of the Discovery network to improve early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge initiative and the ongoing implementation of the Office of Early Childhood to ensure that children with high needs in Connecticut have access to high quality early childhood programs.

Discovery began in 2001 as an initiative of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. The communities participating in Discovery are supported by private and public sources at both the state and local levels. Federal administration and national philanthropic organizations have noted and often point to Discovery's work in early childhood education as a prime example of effective community engagement, planning and decision making on behalf of children. The great majority of Connecticut's high need children and families live in the Discovery communities.

With the support of a partnership among the Memorial Fund, Connecticut Department of Education, and The Children's Fund of Connecticut, 40 of the Discovery communities have worked on and are implementing a comprehensive results-based, birth-to-age-eight community plan. In addition, local municipalities, school districts, United Ways and other private community funders support their local Discovery early childhood collaboratives/councils. Projected results, focus areas and common measures of the community plans have informed system change efforts at both the local and state levels. Statewide advocacy organizations partnering closely with communities persuaded state legislators to sustain funding for local governance in the state budget and to support the Office of Early Childhood.

The state's RTT-ELC planning and application builds on 12 years of existing efforts by Discovery communities and the state. The application proposes to implement a statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System, and to focus high quality programs on children with high needs. Connecticut is not starting from scratch. A robust and thriving network of communities is well positioned to take their efforts to scale to ensure that children of all races and income levels in Connecticut are

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Website: www.wcgmf.org • email: GMFmail@wcgmf.org

ready for school by age five and successful learners by age nine. For the last decade communities have been working to improve access to quality early childhood education programs.

Discovery communities are excited about this opportunity to formalize and strengthen our partnerships with the state to develop an early childhood system that promises to improve the life and education outcomes for all Connecticut's children. We look forward with great anticipation to our state's RTT-ELC application and to continued partnership with your Office and the several state departments that have helped make this work happen in communities.

On behalf of the Discovery communities,

(b)(6)

David M. Nee
Executive Director
William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

List of Discovery Communities:

Ansonia	Hamden	Southington
Bloomfield	Killingly, Plainfield and	Stafford
Branford	Putnam, Sterling	Stamford
Bridgeport	Manchester	Stratford
Bristol	Mansfield	Thomaston
Chaplin	Meriden	Thompson
Colchester	Middletown	Torrington
Coventry	Milford	Vernon
Danbury	Naugatuck	Wallingford
Derby	New Britain	Waterbury
East Hartford	New Haven	West Hartford
East Haven	New London	Wethersfield
Enfield	Norwalk	Winchester
Greenwich	Norwich	Windham
Griswold	Plymouth	Windsor
Groton	Shelton	



October 8, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
 State Capitol
 210 Capitol Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving believes that the single most pressing challenge in our region is to assure that every child has the opportunity to succeed. This is evidenced by our commitment to public-private partnerships that improve outcomes for children through high-quality, coordinated systems of early childhood development and learning at the state, regional and local levels. Toward this end, the Foundation strongly supports Connecticut's application for Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge funds.

For more than two decades, the Foundation has been involved in high quality comprehensive early childhood program development. Our nationally recognized *Brighter Futures Initiative* is a 25-year, \$35 million commitment to improve the school readiness and early school success of Hartford's children age birth through eight years. At its core, *Brighter Futures* focuses on bringing together community residents, providers, funders and the public sector to develop a system of early childhood and family support in Hartford and statewide. Our early support to the Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative to pilot local and regional innovations that improve the quality of child care has led to multiple models adapted statewide, including the Accreditation Facilitation Project. Similarly, the Hartford Foundation was the original funder and partner in the development of Help Me Grow, now a statewide and national model. Both of these models are specifically highlighted in Connecticut's Race to the Top application. In addition, working with the Early Childhood Funders' Collaborative, the Hartford Foundation has been an enthusiastic, committed participant in funding and planning for the statewide Office of Early Childhood.

The Foundation's commitment to continuing this work is evidenced by our recently approved strategic plan, *Accelerate Success* that builds upon and expands the systems-changing work of *Brighter Futures*, to ensure that the children in our region, especially those most disadvantaged, are ready to learn when they enter kindergarten, and are prepared to succeed when they leave high school.

The Foundation's continued investments and collaboration with our philanthropic and public sector partners will augment the impact of federal funds to support state, regional and local efforts to inform and coordinate a comprehensive early childhood system, expand high-quality early childhood programs for all children, identify and address opportunity gaps for high need children and their families and measure the impact of our efforts.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Linda J. Kelly
 President

10 Columbus Boulevard
 Hartford, CT 06106
 Phone: 860-548-1888
 Fax: 860-524-8346
www.hfpg.org

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Here to help.
 Here to stay.

United Way of Connecticut



October 2, 2013

Ms. Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 343
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Ms. Jones-Taylor:

United Way of Connecticut wishes to express its enthusiastic support for Connecticut's 2013 Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge application submitted through the state's new Office of Early Childhood.

United Way of Connecticut and the fifteen local United Ways in the state have a long history of supporting early childhood education in communities across Connecticut. We understand the importance of investing in quality early childhood learning and development programs to increase our children's readiness for kindergarten. Together, United Ways in Connecticut have invested millions of dollars every year and provided community leadership to promote quality initiatives to cover more children (particularly from lower-income families) and to promote better coordination across programs and providers.

Because of our own experience and knowledge in this crucial work, United Ways know what it takes to succeed. That is why we are so enthusiastic about the creation of the new state Office of Early Childhood, and the innovative strategies it is proposing in Connecticut's Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge application to strengthen quality, to promote better coordination, and to insure that high needs children have access to high quality ECE programs.

Connecticut's new Office of Early Childhood restructures the way that early childhood programs are managed in the state government so that going forward it will be much easier to adopt and implement consistent policies and practices across multiple early childhood systems. The office of Early Childhood's innovative and unifying leadership coupled with the Governor's clear support for strengthening early childhood learning has generated renewed hope and commitment toward real progress among community stakeholders, such as United Way. We believe this Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge proposal represents the best opportunity in years for Connecticut's children.

In particular, United Way of Connecticut pledges its full commitment to support Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge efforts to increase the number and percentage of early learning and development programs participating in the statewide tiered quality rating and improvement system and to insure that families have access to these quality ratings through our 2-1-1 Child Care website and contact center. This will build on 2-1-1 Child Care's role over more than twenty years as Connecticut's Child Care

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United Way of Connecticut**2-1-1**

Resource and Referral Agency. United Way of Connecticut also pledges our full support to Connecticut's Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge strategy to build quality for early childhood services provided to many high need children by providing more training for FFN providers who are not interested in obtaining licenses. Finally, United Way of Connecticut stands ready to provide enhanced resource and referral/care coordination for high needs families seeking quality early care and education.

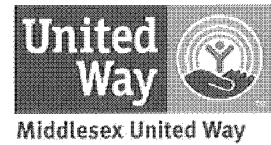
United Way of Connecticut will work to support the implementation of this Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge proposal. We will do so through the direct services we provide in Care 4 Kids, 2-1-1 Child Care, Child Development Infoline, and 2-1-1, through our participation in Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge strategies implementation and by encouraging the leveraging of local United Way investments and leadership work, in promoting quality early childhood learning, especially for high needs children. We look forward to making a difference with you for Connecticut's children.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Richard J. Porth
President & CEO

mobilizing the caring power of communities
to strengthen lives and help people



October 7, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Serving Chester, Clinton,
Cromwell, Deep River, Durham,
East Haddam, East Hampton,
Essex, Haddam, Killingworth,
Middlefield, Middletown,
Old Saybrook, Portland, and
Westbrook

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Funds

Middlesex United Way, Inc is please to support Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative. As a leader in promoting vibrant, supportive communities, we look forward to being an active partner in this important effort to support better outcomes for young children.

Middlesex United Way recognizes the critical role early childhood development plays in a child's long-term academic, economic, and social success. Through our School Readiness initiative we have implemented and continue to support 11 Early Childhood Councils (ECC) that serve all 15 towns in Middlesex County. Our ECC provide local and countywide networking opportunities for the early childhood community, and provides other supports designed to ensure that our children are socially and emotionally ready to enter kindergarten. Our ECC initiative provides workshops and technical assistance to caregivers and parents of preschoolers that focus on curriculum development, assessment, and other evidence-based strategies that ensure a quality preschool experience for our children. During the past year these services, which benefit all children involved in preschool programs throughout Middlesex County, were provided to at least 18,915 caregivers and parents.

In addition, we have in recent years provided funding, volunteers and other supports for the installation of 9 Born Learning Trails throughout Middlesex County for our annual Day of Caring. Born Learning Trails are an early learning tool featuring a series of signs on posts that promote physically and intellectually stimulating activities that are fun for parents and caregivers to do with their children. They are installed in a public setting for everyone in the community to enjoy. We know that children are constantly learning, right from birth. Their early years are the foundation for growth and development, and what they learn during those years depends on the experiences they have each and every day. That is why the Born Learning Trails were perfect for Middlesex United Way's goal to increase children's readiness to learn by school entry.

100 Riverview Center, Suite 230 • Middletown, CT 06457 • Tel (860) 346-8695 • Fax (860) 346-6044
www.middlesexunitedway.org

We remain an active partner with the William C. Graustein Memorial Fund in the Discovery Community initiative. We also continue to provide funding and other supports for local early childhood programs and initiatives such as the YMCA's Kids Korner Program (before and after-school), Opportunity Knocks, Even Start Family Literacy Program, Early Head Start and Middletown's School Readiness Council.

Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative will help us achieve our goals of supporting our community, connecting families to the services they need, and preparing children for academic success. We are pleased that RTT-ELC will improve the coordination and quality of early childhood care and education programs while focusing on the needs of high needs children. Our education initiatives fully support the comprehensive and integrated approach defined in the RTT-ELC application.

We will contribute to the successful implementation of RTT-ELC's projects by:

- Supporting the Office of Early Care and Education and Child Development
- Serve as a resource to build capacity and integrate RTT-ELC systems (e.g. tiered QRIS, Early Learning Standards, improved Kindergarten Inventory) at the regional and local levels as appropriate
- Connect early learning literacy programs (0 - pre-K) and early elementary literacy programs (K - 3) to ensure RTT-ELC impacts are sustained after age 5
- Identify and facilitate linkages to additional resources to expand high quality early learning and development programs
- Promote understanding of the Early Learning Standards, especially among parents and kith and kin
- Encourage provider participation in the QRIS system (including family care programs and kith and kin)
- Facilitate links to private and philanthropic resources to promote long-term project success as appropriate

The estimated total value of our in-kind contributions in support of RTT-ELC is \$20,742 over the four-year grant period.

Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative will improve the lives of Connecticut's high needs children and support the ongoing implementation of Public Act No. 11-181, *"An act concerning early childhood education and the establishment of a coordinated system of early care and education and child development"*.

Middlesex United Way is pleased to be an active partner in these efforts and looks forward to helping you realize the vision of this application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kevin J. Wilhelm
Executive Director

Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel Malloy
 State Capitol
 210 Capitol Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet enthusiastically supports Connecticut's Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge application. The Cabinet is committed to supporting the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) in its quest to develop a high-quality, comprehensive system of early childhood education among the wide array of early childhood programs in the state (including Head Start, child care and School Readiness). The Early Childhood Education Cabinet plays a key role in advising the OEC in regard to advancing the integration of services to young children and families. The Cabinet also established a Public Private Partnership Workgroup at the beginning of the year that includes a diverse group of Connecticut professionals, entrepreneurs, business and government leaders from the municipal and state levels, philanthropy and the non-profit community. The mission of this group is to partner with the OEC to champion the value and importance of: 1) high-quality early childhood services and family supports and 2) public-private partnerships and investments on behalf of Connecticut young children and families. The members of this group provide a unique perspective in accomplishing the common goal of providing Connecticut's young children with high-quality early learning programs.

We are pleased that the Cabinet will continue play a key role in bringing together high-level decision makers from all of the state agencies that touch young children and families in an effort to strengthen collaborative efforts in the creation and coordination of high quality programs and services for Connecticut's youngest children and their families. We are pleased that Connecticut continues to focus on children and families in poverty, English language learners, children with disabilities and other high-needs populations. We know that through these concentrated efforts Connecticut can and will close the preparation gap for these youngsters and provide them with the supports they need to be successful in school and in later life.

Respectfully,

(b)(6)

Leah Grenier
 Chair, Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet

165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford CT 06106
www.ctearlychildhood.org



Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION • P.O. BOX 2219 • HARTFORD, CT 06145



October 11, 2013

RE: Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The leadership of the Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education (SAC or "Council") is prepared to partner with the Connecticut State Office of Early Childhood in its effort to enroll more children in early learning and development programs, including children with disabilities. The ability to offer input on the projects and strategies associated with the primary levers of Connecticut's Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) project – i.e., quality, access and system building – is consistent with the role of the Council as it pertains to young children with disabilities. We look to your leadership, Governor Malloy, to improve the developmental, functional and early outcome of every young child with high needs in Connecticut, and are encouraged by opportunities to work together to achieve this goal.

State Advisory Panels (in Connecticut, the SAC) were authorized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) since the Act's inception in 1975. The SAC is also authorized under Section 10-76i of the Connecticut General Statutes with the express purpose to "advise the General Assembly, the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education" on special education matters. The SAC's specific functions include the following actions:

- advise the State Department of Education of unmet needs in educating children with disabilities;
- review periodically the laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines pertaining to special education and recommend to the Connecticut General Assembly and the State Board of Education any changes which it finds necessary;
- comment publicly on any new or revised regulations, standards and guidelines proposed for issuance;
- participate with the State Board of Education in the development of any state eligibility documents for provision of special education;
- comment publicly on any procedures necessary for distributing federal IDEA funds;
- assist the State Department of Education in developing and reporting such data and evaluations as may be conducted pursuant to IDEA;
- advise the State Department of Education in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of IDEA;
- advise the State Department of Education in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities; and
- report to the Connecticut General Assembly concerning recommendations for effecting changes in the special education laws.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

October 11, 2013

Page 2

The Council is prepared to offer input on Connecticut RTT-ELC projects and strategies associated with (1) increasing the quality of programs currently serving high needs children; (2) increasing access to high quality programs for families of high needs children; and (3) creating a system to support quality and access. Connecticut RTT-ELC projects of particular interest, as they relate to children with disabilities, include the following:

- “System Building” projects involving (a) legislative and policy changes, and (b) information to families and collaboration with local communities; and
- “Access” projects which (a) provide families with information about the importance of quality, and the quality ratings of programs; (b) provide families, and particularly those receiving public funding, with incentives to choose high quality programs; (c) create targeted information campaigns for all programs and providers who have contact with families of children with high needs in order to encourage families to select quality programs; (d) improve identification and referral of high needs children; and (e) promote health, mental health, and developmental screenings.

Thank you for focusing the use of RTT-ELC funds on children with high needs. Through our Council efforts, the SAC is in communication with other organizations and constituency groups who have shared the current challenges and opportunities in helping children with high needs. The Council is prepared to partner and provide input into the development of this statewide program as the State works to meet the needs of young children with disabilities.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kelly Neyra

Vice Chair

Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education

State Interagency Coordinating Council

October 7, 2013

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue
Room G-31
Hartford, CT 06106
State of Connecticut

Mark A. Greenstein, M.D.
ICC Chair/Pediatrician
Sharri Lungarini
ICC Vice Chair/Parent
Wade Chartier
Parent
Mary Ann Dayton Fitzgerald
Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired
Timothy Lyons
Dept. of Insurance
Nancy DiMauro
Dept. for Children and Families
Rita Esposito
REACHOUT, Inc.
Corrine Griffin
Parent
Tierney Gianotti, alternate
Center for Excellence
Cynthia Jackson
Children's Therapy Services
Lynn Johnson
Dept. of Developmental Services
Robert Kelly, alternate for
Senator Anthony Musto
Robert LaCamera, M.D.
American Academy of Pediatrics
Ginny Mahoney
Dept. of Social Services
Miriam Martinez
Parent
Joe McLaughlin
McLaughlin and Associates
Lorna Quiros-Dilan
Office of Protection and Advocacy
John Reilly
Board of Education and Services For the Blind
Laurel Ross
Abilis
Maria Synodi
State Dept. of Education
Louis Tallarita
SDE-Homeless Children
Erin Lamb
Parent
Alice Torres
Early Head Start
Janet Brancifort
Dept. of Public Health
Myra Watnick
Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.

Dear Dr. Jones Taylor:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds

I am writing this on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Connecticut Birth to Three Interagency Coordinating Council (the Council). This letter confirms the ongoing commitment of the Council to improving early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative and the activities of the newly constituted Office of Early Childhood (OEC).

The Council advises and assists the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to perform its responsibilities under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including identifying sources of fiscal support for early intervention services and programs, assigning financial responsibility to the appropriate agency, and promoting interagency agreements. The Council also assists participating agencies in the development of standards and procedures under Part C of IDEA, and works with DDS and the State Department of Education regarding the transition of children with disabilities to services provided under sections 10-76a to 10-76h, services provided under section B of IDEA. Finally, the Council makes recommendations to improve collaboration among state agencies and ensure timely and effective service delivery. We support the goal of this process “to increase the percentage of the children with high needs who are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs by 50%”.

The Executive Committee notes that the Council will support the successful implementation of Connecticut's RTT-ELC project by building on the collaborative spirit of the RTT-ELC proposed development process to continue to strengthen connections among state systems and advisory bodies. The executive committee, on behalf of the Council, supports this endeavor. We especially wish to note our endorsement of the following components:

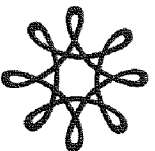
- The development and support of collaborations that may serve to expand and enhance services to children.
- Continue to work on finding children, especially those who are generally underserved, who can benefit from the wide range of services for which they are eligible.
- Increasing the quality of programs. We feel that this will increase the number of children referred to and eligible for early intervention services and/or monitoring and family support. Our experience has been that an emphasis on quality and equity has served those children and families in our system very well.
- Improving access for families throughout the state. Again, it is hoped that this will permit earlier identification of children and families who would benefit from support, monitoring and/or early intervention.
- Enhancing and expanding system building so that the current system and its integration into communities can serve more families and children. In addition, the integration of our already extensive data system may serve as a model of integration and support.
- Expanded grant and research support. Such activities will serve many children, including those who are eligible for Part C services.

The Council stands behind Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge proposal and eagerly anticipates its impact on our young children.

Yours,

(b)(6)

Mark A. Greenstein, MD
 Professor of Pediatrics and Associate Program Director
 Divisions of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics and Clinical Genetics
 University of Connecticut School of Medicine
 Chair: Connecticut Birth to Three Interagency Coordinating Council



CSPD

Connecticut's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Council

Council Chairperson

David Scata
East Haddam Public Schools

Part C CSPD Coordinator

Deb Resnick
CT Birth to Three System

Part B CSPD Co-Coordiators

Martame Kirner, Ph.D.
Kim Meerman
State Education Resource Center

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds

This letter confirms the ongoing commitment of Connecticut's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Council to improve early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative and the ongoing implementation of Public Act No. 11-181, "*An act concerning early childhood education and the establishment of a coordinated system of early care and education and child development.*"

The mission of the Connecticut Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Council is to advise the Birth to Three System and the Connecticut State Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education on issues pertaining to the professional development of pre-service and in-service early childhood and education practitioners. This is accomplished through the exchange of ideas, the preparation of advisory papers, and the exploration of issues that affect personnel development as they arise. Our efforts will help shape the professional development of the personnel who serve children and young adults with disabilities.

The CSPD Council currently supports system change efforts at the state level by advising the Bureau of Special Education and the Birth to Three System at the Department of Developmental Services on personnel issues regarding children with disabilities. In addition, the CSPD Council provides stakeholder input on the design of personnel development such as certification requirements and professional development for pre-service and in-service educators. The Council also provides resources for educators and families of children with disabilities such as the Early Intervention video and training package.

The Council supported the development of Connecticut's RTT-ELC application through continued collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education and Department of Developmental Services' Birth to Three System. This application aligns well with key CSPD priorities regarding the prevention and early intervention of disabilities in children and the recruitment and retention of personnel who work with children with disabilities.

To ensure successful implementation of Connecticut's RTT-ELC project, CSPD will contribute the following:

- **Priority for Early Childhood Education.** Support the state's workforce development efforts, specifically as they relate to IDEA Part A and Part C, drawing on expertise in these areas. The Council will elevate early childhood education to a top organizational priority over the next four years.
- **Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.** Designate one of our members with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation (e.g., higher education) to join the workgroup of key stakeholders that will develop a common statewide workforce framework (Section D1).

We estimate the value of our in-kind contributions to the RTT-ELC project at \$6000 over the four-year grant period.

We look forward to working with you on this exciting endeavor to ensure that all of Connecticut's children – particularly those with disabilities – are prepared to succeed when they enter kindergarten.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

David Scata
Connecticut's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Council Chairperson

C/O SERC

25 Industrial Park Road Middletown, CT 06457-1516
(860) 632-1485 www.ctserc.org/cspd



Connecticut Head Start Association



October 7, 2013

The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
Governor of Connecticut
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Head Start Association (CT HSA) enthusiastically supports Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative. As a coalition of Head Start Directors, CT HSA members have been addressing the needs of high need children since 1965, and we look forward to being an active partner in this effort to improve early childhood outcomes.

One of the nation's leading investments in early childhood education, Head Start programs provide comprehensive education, health, nutrition, parent involvement, community engagement, and family support services that have been shown to clearly improve long-term educational attainment, social-emotional development, and health outcomes of our most vulnerable and at-risk children. The CT Head Start Association's members serve over 8,000 high need children (e.g. low income, developmentally disabled, English language learners) through 18 Head Start & Early Head Start grantees statewide.

CT HSA has strong partnerships at the state and local levels of Connecticut's early childhood care and education system, including the Office of Early Childhood, the Department of Children & Families, school districts, and local Early Childhood Councils, among others. CT HSA President David Morgan serves on Connecticut's Early Childhood Cabinet, and Head Start has been actively involved in many work groups around early learning standards, workforce competencies, quality rating & improvement systems, and more.

We are pleased that Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative will improve continuity and quality across early childhood care and education programs. Our efforts fully support the comprehensive and integrated approach defined in the RTT-ELC application. CT HSA will contribute to the successful implementation of the following RTT-ELC projects: 1) the ongoing implementation of Connecticut's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS); 2) improved approaches to reaching and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable children and families; 3) the ongoing implementation of Early Learning and Development Standards; 4) improved health-related training and assessments; and 4) ongoing development of integrated data collection systems. Specifically, the CT HSA will:

- Assist in the implementation of the QRIS system;
- Promote full early childhood provider participation in the QRIS system (including Head Start and Early Head Start programs);
- Assist the Office of Early Childhood in reaching and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable children and families;
- Continue to participate in the Office of Early Childhood's Early Learning Standards work to assist families, providers, and communities with the ongoing implementation and training support;
- Provide educational resources from the Head Start model for health, mental health, and family engagement/support standards;
- Identify and facilitate linkages to additional resources to expand high quality early learning and development programs;
- Increase early screening and mid-level assessments in Head Start and Early Head Start programs as appropriate;
- Continue to support and incorporate data protocols through Connecticut's Early Childhood Information System (ECIS);
- Facilitate links to private and philanthropic resources to promote long-term project success as appropriate;

Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative will improve the lives of Connecticut's most at-risk children and support the ongoing work of Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood. The Connecticut Head Start Association is pleased to be an active partner in these efforts and looks forward to helping you realize the vision of this application.

Sincerely,
(b)(6)



David Morgan – Chair of the Connecticut Head Start Association



ALL OUR KIN INC.

A SAFE AND LOVING PLACE WHERE PARENTS AND CHILDREN CAN LEARN

October 7, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

We write to express our commitment to the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant application being submitted by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) on behalf of the state. All Our Kin strongly supports the OEC's proposed efforts to provide Connecticut's children with high-quality early learning experiences in all settings, including licensed family child care programs.

All Our Kin is a nationally-recognized, Connecticut-based nonprofit that trains, supports, and sustains family child care providers to ensure that children and families have the foundation they need to succeed in school and in life. Through workshops, trainings, and on-site coaching and consultation, we train and support over 250 parents and educators each year, who in turn serve nearly 1,500 children. We work with a diverse group of primarily low-income parents and providers from a range of neighborhoods and towns.

We are delighted that this Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge plan recognizes the essential role that family child care programs play in providing early learning experiences to high-need children. The application proposes to create regional quality improvement centers to provide training and technical assistance that will give family child care providers opportunities to improve quality in their programs and obtain national accreditation. Providers will also gain access to health coaches and mental health consultants who can help them facilitate developmental screening for young children in their care, ensuring that high-need children will be identified and connected with resources. Additionally, the state-wide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, ConneCT to Quality, will promote quality improvement and licensure among child care providers in all settings, including family child care.

All Our Kin is happy to support this initiative in multiple capacities. We look forward to partnering with the OEC to bring family child care providers into ConneCT to Quality and move programs to higher levels within the system. Our experience may also help inform the OEC as it works to disseminate the Core Knowledge and Competencies and the Early Learning Standards to family child care providers.

The newly-created OEC is well-positioned to take the lead on coordinating the efforts outlined in this application. The OEC is specifically tasked with creating a coherent and cohesive system for early childhood education and has already done much to unify a previously fractured field of agencies and service providers. The OEC has strong partnerships with stakeholders across the state and will offer the leadership required to make this ambitious plan a reality.

This grant will provide the opportunity for the State of Connecticut to dramatically increase the percentage of high-need children who have access to the high-quality early learning experiences that we know are so vital to later success. Connecticut is poised to implement a unified and collaborative vision for quality improvement in early learning settings. With federal support, we will be able to create system-wide changes that will help ensure that children and families, regardless of circumstance, have access to high-quality programs. All Our Kin supports these goals and will work toward the success of this Race to the Top grant project.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Jessica Sager
Executive Director
All Our Kin, Inc.

WWW.ALLOURKIN.ORG P.O. BOX 8477 NEW HAVEN CONNECTICUT 06530 203-772-2294 (F) 203-772-2386

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

CT Division of Early Childhood

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Molloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge funds

The Connecticut Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Early Childhood is pleased to support Connecticut's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge initiative and the ongoing implementation of whatever needs to be implemented in order to propose to increase the number of children with high needs who are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs statewide. High needs is defined as children living in poverty, children with disabilities, and children who are English language learners. Currently about half of the children with high needs in publicly-funded early learning and development programs are in programs of unknown quality.

The Council for Exceptional Children is a premier education organization internationally known for its expertise and leadership working collaboratively with strategic partners to ensure that children and youth with exceptionalities are valued and are full participating members of society. In CT CEC is a trusted voice in shaping education practice and policy. Our Division of Early Childhood is the key organization in CT that best represents and supports the advancement of early childhood education for children with high needs. CT DEC provides professional development in best practices for children who have challenging behaviors and specific physical needs, as well as professional development for teachers.

We have been supporting system change efforts at the State level through participation in the Early Childhood Education Cabinet's Workforce Committee and state level early childhood conferences. While coordination at the state level contributes to improved local collaboration, the Council also contributes directly to the regional and local early childhood system via advocating for appropriate programming and supports for children of high needs as well as for appropriate preparation of early childhood educators who work with children of high need.

Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative aligns well with our efforts to improve the professional standards of early childhood educator training and increase access to accredited quality workforce development programs. We will work diligently with other RTT-ELC partners to achieve RTT-ELC project goals in the following ways:

1 – Continue to support Connecticut's newly created Office of Early Childhood (OEC). This new office is well positioned to serve as a strong, centralized, governing structure to realize this objective. It is already obvious that this new office has the pulse of early childhood in CT and seeks to bring better services to children through coordinated and streamlined means. Many of the policies and projects that will be unified and expanded as part of this proposal already fall under the auspices of the new OEC or are scheduled to do so in July 2014.

2 - This proposal for this major funding opportunity is designed to expand the capacity of early childhood systems in Connecticut to enhance the quality of all types of early learning and development programs and to ensure that children with high needs in Connecticut have access to high quality programs. It is proposed to accomplish these goals through two major efforts:

a) **Statewide Systems Building**, which involves implementing a statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, ConneCT to Quality: Connecticut's Early Learning Quality System (C2Q) , with an associated statewide technical assistance network and professional development system for the early childhood workforce; and

b) **High Quality for High Needs**, which involves implementing related policies and initiatives to increase the number and percentage of children with high needs attending high quality early learning and development programs of all types and increasing their readiness for Kindergarten. This includes a broad based screening effort to identify children with special needs earlier. It is also proposed to sustain gains made by children in high quality early childhood programs into their Kindergarten through third grade education.

All of the elements of the plan speak to the needs of children of high need. Together these plans will help ensure that more children receive quality early care and education, more parents receive sound information to guide their choices, and more providers receive support to enhance their skills and services. RTT-ELC funding will significantly help the early childhood community in CT to achieve these objectives and increase the supply of high quality programs in Connecticut. In recent years there has been a major effort to bring all EC stakeholders to the same table in order to work together to plan for the whole child in a whole way. This is the only way that all children will be able to benefit from the programs they need to meet everyday and high needs.

Our in-kind contribution in support of RTT-ELC projects will total an estimated \$10,000 during the four years of the grant period. We appreciate the opportunity to further the quality of Connecticut's early childhood systems and wish you success in this effort.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Regina Miller, President



**Connecticut Education
Association**

Governance

Sheila Cohen, President
Jeff Leake, Vice President
Pat Jordan, Secretary
Thomas Nicholas, Treasurer
Kathy Flaherty, NEA Director
Gary Peluchette, NEA Director

Executive Office

Mark Waxenberg
Executive Director
Capitol Place, Suite 500
21 Oak Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860-525-5641 800-842-4316
Fax 860-725-6388

An affiliate of the
National Education Association

October 9, 2013

Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capital
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Education Association fully endorses and supports Connecticut's Race to The Top – Early Childhood Education grant application. We look forward to continuing our integral participation in the progress our state has made toward enhancing early childhood education.

CEA is a professional association with a membership of more than 43,000 active and retired teachers. CEA members have long recognized that achievement gaps exist across our communities because many students begin school less ready than others. For years, CEA has promoted the expansion of early childhood education as one of the most significant steps toward closing these gaps.

Our staff includes doctors of education, experienced teachers, and experts in policies that affect teaching and learning. CEA has long been an active participant on state committees charged with reviewing certification regulations for all educators, including early childhood educators. CEA was a proponent of legislative actions to improve early childhood educator credentialing and establish a rigorous professional certification. CEA has also continually monitored the work of state early childhood agencies like the Office of Early Childhood and its predecessor the Early Childhood Cabinet, to communicate priorities to our members so that they can better connect state goals to classroom practices.

Consistent with our history, CEA has been a strong supporter of Race to The Top Early Childhood applications. We voiced our support early in the process and were a participant in the press conference announcing Connecticut's decision to apply for the initial grant two years ago. We provided input to the grant writing team on earlier drafts of the initial application, and fully support our state's current efforts.

CEA has also been an active participant in developing and supporting innovative early childhood education programs at the local level. In many school districts across the state, our members serve in partnerships between school districts and early childhood education providers. Such partnerships are mainly implemented to carry out the state's School Readiness program, which seeks to provide increased access to high-quality early childhood education in cities with traditionally low participation rates. CEA's work even extends to less formal settings where we help to coordinate services among early childhood programs and provide other forms of assistance.

Many CEA members continue to participate in an innovative universal pre-school program initiated in Stamford when you served as mayor. In Stamford, CEA members provide direct instruction to early childhood participants and professional development that strengthens connections to state standards. CEA has also been instrumental in aligning state early childhood standards to the school district, connecting the early childhood curriculum with the work and expectations of Stamford's kindergarten teachers. The work CEA members do in Stamford is replicated in many urban districts across the state.

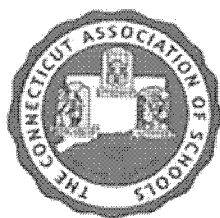
Through the experience in Stamford and other cities, Connecticut offers seeds of innovation in the delivery of early childhood education. We strongly believe that Connecticut deserves to be awarded this grant so that our lessons in innovation can benefit other states seeking to establish effective early childhood programs.

Connecticut, like the rest of the nation, faces the challenge of closing achievement differences that exist among students of color, students who are English language learners, and the many children who experience poverty. We strongly endorse Connecticut's application because of the potential that our state's strategy has to address achievement differences and positively impact the growth and development of our youngest learners.

Should Connecticut be awarded this grant, CEA will stand ready to provide insight and assistance in the development and implementation of professional development and other services that will improve access to early childhood programs and enhance their quality. CEA will also work to ensure that our early childhood classrooms implement the most effective practices to increase student achievement and ensure that every student enters school ready to learn and with the same early childhood opportunities experienced by their peers.

(b)(6)

Sheila Cohen
President
Connecticut Education Association



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Dr. Karissa L. Niehoff

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Secretary-Treasurer
Dr. Beth Smith, Headmaster
Shelton High School

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- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- Association for Middle Level Education
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- New England League of Middle Schools
- National Federation of State High School Associations

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THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

October 9, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

This letter confirms the commitment of the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) to improve early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in **Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC)** initiative and the ongoing implementation of Public Act No. 11-181, *"An act concerning early childhood education and the establishment of a coordinated system of early care and education and child development"*.

CAS's mission is to improve and expand educational opportunities for Connecticut's students while striving to strengthen the professional skills and talents of school leaders. CAS provides services to more than 1000 public and parochial schools, Pre K-12, in a variety of areas including school improvement, leadership development, and the governance of both interscholastic athletics and students activities. CAS supports system change efforts at the State level through participation in writing the Race to the Top Grant, the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, the LEAD Connecticut partnership, the High School Graduation Issues Task Force, the Expanded Learning Opportunities State Leadership Team, and the School Governance Councils Advisory Board. CAS also implements the Executive Coach program for administrators, represents Connecticut on the New England Secondary Schools Consortium, and provides extensive professional development for principals in many areas of educational progress and reform.

CAS has reviewed and overview of Connecticut's RTT-ELC application, and enthusiastically supports the priorities of the proposed project. In particular, CAS is prepared to support and facilitate where appropriate proposed RTT-ELC efforts to sustain early childhood program efforts in the early elementary grades; revise statewide early learning standards to align with Connecticut's K-3 standards; and develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework to strengthen the early childhood educator workforce.

While CAS supports the implementation of a QRIS to ensure high quality in all publicly funded preschool programs, we believe that public schools that are currently license exempt will need time and flexibility as they determine what, if any, issues need to be addressed to meet state health and safety standards. It is the hope of CAS that the OEC will work with public schools on specific issues and concerns that may impact their ability to become licensed and consider how best to insure that all young children receive early childhood services in programs of known quality.

CAS understands that high quality early childhood programs (as well as comprehensive supports for young children, their families, and their educators) lay the foundation for success in school. We therefore endorse Connecticut's Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge proposal.

Best Regards,

(b)(6)

Karissa L. Niehoff, Ed.D.
Executive Director, Connecticut Association of Schools



Promoting a positive future for Connecticut's children.

October 9, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Re: Connecticut's Application for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Family Day Care Association's Network Inc. (CFDCAN) supports Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative. As a network of family child care associations, CFDCAN is committed to promoting a positive future for Connecticut's children by promoting and supporting high quality child care.

CFDCAN's primary focus is family child care association leadership. We believe that strong leadership in local associations assists their membership, the individuals providing direct care to children birth through school-age, to aspire to provide high quality care and programming.

The Connecticut RTT-ELC initiative will improve continuity and quality across early childhood care and education programs, supporting these programs through:

- The Quality Rating Improvement System
- The use of Standards (birth to age 5) and Core Knowledge and Competencies
- Providing training, technical assistance and support to family child care providers and kith/kin providers
- Promoting the use of quality child care programs to the public
- Improving identification and referral of high needs children

CFDCAN will work with Connecticut's family child care associations, early childhood organizations and state agencies to continue to promote high quality care. We are committed to improving the status of family child care programs in Connecticut by helping alert the public to the benefits of family child care and high quality programming, providing ongoing support to local family child care associations, and disseminating information to reach individual providers.

Connecticut Family Day Care Associations Network, Inc.
8 Spruce Drive, Sandy Hook, CT 06482 203.426.9663 renee@cfdcn.org www.cfdcan.org

Respectfully,

(b)(6)

Renee C. Gill
Executive Director

CFDCAN, Connecticut Family Day Care Associations Network, Inc.

Statewide family child care associations

Additional endorsement from:

Bolton Providers Network, Mary-Jo Nichols, President

(Area: Bolton)

Family Child Care Providers Association – Manchester Area, Cydnae Michalak, President

(Area: Andover, Bolton, Colchester, Coventry, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Glastonbury, Hebron, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, South Windsor, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Willington, Windsor, Windsor Locks)

Northwest Care, Priscilla Leslie Slater, President

(Area: Barkhamsted, Goshen, Harwinton, Litchfield, New Hartford, Northfield, Torrington, Winchester)

Lower Fairfield County Family Day Care Association, Cecelia Montero, President

(Area: Stamford)

Today's Child Care Association, Katie Cicero, President

(Area: Colchester, Coventry, East Haddam, East Hampton, Haddam, Marlborough, Portland, Salem)

Valley Child Care Providers Association, Joanne Scollin, President

(Area: Derby, Ansonia, Seymour, Beacon Falls, Naugatuck, Oxford, Shelton)

West Haven Family Day Care Provider Network, Viola Waldo, President

(Area: West Haven)

Connecticut Family Day Care Associations Network, Inc.

8 Spruce Drive, Sandy Hook, CT 06482 203.426.9663 renee@cfdcn.org www.cfdcan.org



October 8, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
 State Capitol
 210 Capitol Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) strongly supports Connecticut's 2013 Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge application and the work of the Office of Early Childhood.

As a state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the nation's premier early childhood care and education accreditation organization, CAEYC has been an active partner of state, regional, and local efforts to improve quality care and education for all children. Incorporated in 1971, CAEYC has more than 1500 members in Connecticut and has been actively working on behalf of young children and the professionals who care for them for more than 40 years. Our affiliates work together following a national, state, local model, to promote high-quality early learning for all children birth-8. We believe high-quality early care and education lay the foundation for school readiness, academic success and adult achievement.

Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative aligns well with CAEYC's goals to improve the standard of care for young children. Critical to this work is the full implementation of Connecticut's tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, ConneCT to Quality (C2Q). CAEYC has been an active partner in the development of C2Q and will continue to work in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood through implementation. A fully implemented QRIS system will allow parents to make informed decisions about quality childcare thus driving quality improvement efforts in programs. C2Q will support a system of program improvement by providing tools and resources to programs, and a statewide technical assistance network and professional development system for the early childhood workforce. CAEYC will support the successful implementation of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge initiatives by:

- Working in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood to engage all early childhood programs in ConneCT to Quality
- Working in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood to coordinate competency based professional development initiatives
- Serve as a technical assistance resource for programs as they engage in quality improvement efforts
- Engage stakeholders in a statewide conversation about early childhood teacher compensation

CAEYC is a leading advocate of high quality care for Connecticut's children. We look forward to partnering with you in this exciting initiative.

Very Truly Yours,

(b)(6)

Karen Rainville
 Executive Director



330 Main Street – Third Floor - Hartford, CT 06106
 Phone: 860.548.1747 Fax: 860.541.6484 www.conncase.org

October 4, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
 State Capitol
 210 Capitol Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds

The Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE) strongly supports Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. If funded, the proposed RTT-ELC project will improve the developmental, functional and early outcomes of all students in Connecticut.

ConnCASE is a local division of the National CASE organization that supports and champions the needs of children with disabilities, particularly those receiving special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, Section 611 and 619. ConnCASE accomplishes their mission by promoting appropriate educational programs and services for all children; encouraging and strengthening communication between special education, pupil services and general education; developing and promoting standards of professional competence for special education and pupil services personnel, and promoting and strengthening relationships between special education, pupil services and related community services, among others.

ConnCASE also encourages the development of policies and procedures that will promote desirable special education and pupil services practices at the state and local levels. In this role, ConnCASE works to ensure that all students, ages 3 through 21, with disabilities and their families have access to the high-quality services that promote positive developmental outcomes including closing the achievement gap at kindergarten entry.

ConnCASE will support the efforts of Connecticut's RTT-ELC to meet the needs of all young children, particularly those with disabilities and the needs of their parents by:

- Supporting the efforts of the Early Childhood Cabinet's Standards Committee to develop statewide, high-quality early learning and development standards – particularly as they relate to children with disabilities – and helping to ensure that the standards align with Connecticut's K-3 standards.
- Providing guidance to the new State Office of Early Care and Education and Child Development in their efforts to improve and coordinate training for early childhood educators and program staff on health and mental health standards for young children with disabilities.

We are committed to providing in-kind contributions and technical assistance to the RTT – ELC Project over the four year grant period.

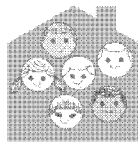
ConnCASE reiterates its support for Connecticut's RTT-ELC application and looks forward to supporting its successful implementation to benefit all children ages 0-5, including those receiving early intervention and specialized instruction.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

A rectangular box with a black border, used to redact the signature of Michael Regan. The text "(b)(6)" is written in the top-left corner of the box.

Michael Regan
President, ConnCASE



**Hartford Area
Child Care Collaborative**

October 8, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy,

The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative strongly supports Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant application. As a network of more than 350 early care and education organizations, students, and individuals, the Collaborative is committed to promoting and supporting high-quality child care in the greater Hartford region.

High-quality early childhood experiences promote successful development and help children to seek out and open the doors of discovery - to become successful in school and successful in life. For the past 25 years as an initiative of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, we have been active in developing and implementing much of the existing early learning and development infrastructure that RTT-ELC projects to advance and improve.

Examples of our commitment to improving the quality of childcare by working systematically include:

- Being one of the creators of the **CT Accreditation Facilitation Project** to assist child care centers in becoming NAEYC accredited
- Collaborating with the CT State Education Resource Center and All Our Kin to offer professional development opportunities for licensed and Kith and Kin **Family Child Care providers** on **early learning standards**
- Collaborating with Charter Oak State College, CT Charts-A-Course, and the Department of Social Services to develop the **Connecticut's Director's Credential** for childcare center directors
- Collaborating with the Office of Early Childhood Charts-A-Course and the Department of Social Services to develop the **Emergency Leave and Succession Planning Learning Series** for early childhood directors

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An initiative of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

Working together to ensure quality child care

The Collaborative has a long history of moving the field forward by incubating and designing regional models that upon success, are replicated state-wide. We are pleased with Connecticut's comprehensive proposal, and are excited that two of the Collaborative's current models are proposed to be replicated and expanded including:

Paving the Way – a systematic new approach within community colleges to combine English as a Second Language (ESL) courses with credit bearing early childhood education courses. This streamlines the process and includes wrap-around services. Retention rates in this learning cohort doubled that of traditional ESL classes.

CT Early Childhood Career Development Website – a comprehensive site for the public that includes information on early childhood careers, educational and credential requirements, institutions of higher education, and financial aid/scholarships.

As a member of the CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet's QRIS workgroup, the Collaborative will continue to serve as a means to promote awareness and involvement in the QRIS, and will share information learned from the Hartford region. In addition, the Collaborative will:

- Increase awareness of RTT-ELC resources to support high-need children among providers, especially licensed family caregivers, kith and kin.
- Educate Collaborative members and serve as a supportive entity to promote the RTT-ELC projects and goals.
- Serve as a convener of groups, a professional development training resource, and a regional resource to move the work of the RTT-ELC initiative forward.

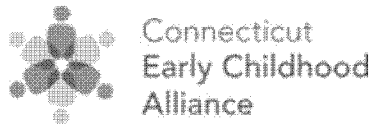
The creation of the new Office of Early Childhood through Executive Order 35 has already made a positive impact on the field, and will continue to do so by coordinating, aligning, and supporting the early childhood work in Connecticut. The Office of Early Childhood will lead a coordinated effort to implement the State Plan to dramatically increase the percentage of children with high needs who are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs.

We look forward to working with you and being an active partner in supporting the early childhood field, especially those who serve children with high-needs.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Elena Trueworthy
Director



October 8, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance expresses its strong support for Connecticut's 2013 Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge application submitted through the Office of Early Childhood.

The Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance (Alliance) is a statewide membership and advocacy organization committed to improving developmental outcomes in the areas of learning, health, safety and economic security for children birth through age eight. The Alliance was founded in 2002 as a networking opportunity for early childhood organizations and has since grown to become the go-to organization for early childhood information sharing, networking, policy development, and advocacy. The Alliance has 100 organizational members, representing a diverse group of policy advocates, providers, parent groups, public agencies, and philanthropy.

Connecticut has a tremendous opportunity to create a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood system with the establishment of an Office of Early Childhood in July of 2013. Early childhood programs, previously spread out across five state agencies, are now or soon will be housed within the Office of Early Childhood. This brings synergy, better coordination, efficiencies, and improved outcomes in the delivery of early childhood services to high-need children. The Office of Early Childhood's new fresh and inspiring leadership, coupled with the deep commitment from Governor Dannel P. Malloy, brings a strong sense of renewed hope and focus on our youngest and most vulnerable children who need the supports and resources to ensure they are ready for school and lifelong success.

Because Connecticut now has an Office of Early Childhood that has a single focus on our youngest children, the Alliance believes that Connecticut is poised to truly improve its early childhood system. The use of Results-Based Accountability will yield measurable positive outcomes for our high-need children. The Race to the Top proposal presents an immense opportunity to make this happen.

Additionally, the Office of Early Childhood is fortunate to have a partnership with the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, comprised of 14 philanthropic entities committed to investing in early childhood services and systems building, and which will invest \$1.3 million in the next year in private funds to help State government reorganize. One foundation, the Graustein Memorial Fund, has invested heavily for years in local communities, building a 58-community network of local structures to enhance early learning on the ground level. These state-local

Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance, 110 Bartholomew Avenue, Suite 4030, Hartford, CT 06106
860.819.3647, www.earlychildhoodalliance.com

linkages are essential to helping connect high-needs families with appropriate supports and services, and engage them in leadership development and advocacy opportunities.

The Alliance supports the goal of increasing the percentage of high-need children who have access to high-quality learning and developmental experiences. We are particularly encouraged that this application identifies early childhood settings with unknown quality and intends to provide these programs with tools and resources to increase access and quality. Our most vulnerable children will receive the developmental supports they need starting at birth. The Alliance embraces the strategy to place a substantial amount of attention on licensed family child care providers and unlicensed family, friend and neighbor care, two settings that provide care to our most vulnerable children.

It is also exciting that Connecticut will implement a well-researched and carefully designed Quality Rating and Improvement System, known as ConneCT to Quality (C2Q). C2Q importantly incorporates a robust statewide technical assistance network and professional development structure to support the early childhood workforce, which is foundational to a child's early learning experience and development.

The Alliance will work to support implementing the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge proposal by:

- Supporting the Office by advocating independently for needed legislative and administrative changes to implement components of the proposal;
- Informing legislators and all public leaders of key components of the proposal and how they will change a child's life trajectory and ultimately close the achievement gap;
- Providing a communication and feedback bridge between all venues of the early childhood community and the Office of Early Childhood;
- Mobilizing Alliance members and others to take action, when needed, to support successful implementation of the proposal.

The Alliance's goal is that all Connecticut children will not only enter kindergarten healthy, eager to learn, but all young children are ready for school and lifelong success. We are excited about the potential for Connecticut's Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge initiative to improve outcomes for Connecticut's children.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Gail Nolan

Co-Chair, on behalf of the CT Early Childhood Alliance Steering Committee



Patrice Peterson
President

Stephen Anderson
Secretary/Treasurer

Robert D. Rinker
Executive Director

October 15, 2013

To: U.S. Department of Education

Re: State of Connecticut, Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant

I am writing in support of our state's Race to the Top (RTT) Application. At CSEA SEIU Local 2001 we have been working with family child care providers since 2005 to address many of the problems they face as early educators. We believe that many of the strategies put forth in the RTT application begin to address these issues.

The children we all want to reach are being cared for in home-based child care, with little or no oversight or knowledge of what is happening in these settings. It is about time that we focus attention on how we help stabilize this workforce and support its professionalization.

It is important that any system of early care and education strive to meet the needs of working parents, early educators – including family child care providers, and of course children. Over the years we have learned that parents want access to high quality care that provides the nurturing of mind and body that children need. For high needs families, this means that care must also be affordable, with the flexibility to handle non-traditional work schedules. We have learned that providers have a good handle on the needs of children but would welcome professional development that is offered at reasonable rates and during times that do not conflict with their responsibilities as child care providers. Offering incentives to accomplish this on a large scale is a smart move. This RTT application does that.

As the state with the largest achievement gap in the country, we would be wise to ensure that all high needs children are cared for in programs and homes where we know positive child development and early learning is promoted. Supporting parents with information on how to ensure that their child care choices provide the best opportunities for their children is a move in the right direction.

The more we learn about brain development, the stronger and more coordinated our support systems will need to be for families with young children. The implementation of Connecticut's RTT strategies will build on the foundation that our new Office of Early Childhood is putting in place to accomplish this.

Robert D. Rinker
Executive Director



October 14, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy,

AFT Connecticut strongly supports high quality, universal preschool education and believes it is one of the most effective ways to close our state's opportunity and achievement gaps. On behalf of our 29,000 members, I am writing to offer AFT Connecticut's support to the Office of Early Childhood's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTTT-ELC). Based on our review of the provided summary, we endorse the RTTT-ELC application because of the emphasis it puts on quality early education for high needs students, including the system for improving screening data from health care providers and improving referrals of high needs children. Early intervention will significantly improve the child's chances for success once they enter the school system.

AFT Connecticut believes that licensed learning centers staffed with certified professionals is crucial to ensuring the needs of every child are met. We are pleased to endorse this aspect of the RTTT-ELC application. It is imperative that we maintain high standards for early childhood teachers to be certain that those who have the greatest educational impact on young students are in fact adequately and appropriately trained. We could not support any efforts to dilute or exempt certification requirements for early childhood educators.

While we wholeheartedly support many aspects of the RTTT-ELC proposal, we have concerns about new standards that may be imposed on public school early childhood education programs. We would like to see more consideration given to providing flexibility to these school districts. They may need ample time and additional funding to make any necessary upgrades to their facilities or changes in protocol. We are concerned that requiring too many changes too soon will force districts to close their facilities and discontinue educating preschoolers. That is something that none of us would want. We are optimistic that the final document will address these concerns.

AFT Connecticut is a diverse union of Professionals including educators, healthcare workers and state employees. Our mission has always been, and will continue to be, supporting our children, educators and school districts in their efforts to ensure highly quality education to all our students. We wish you the best of luck with Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Melodie Peters
President

(b)(6)

Stephen McKeever
First Vice President

AFT Connecticut
AFT, AFL-CIO

Healthcare
Higher Education
Public Employees
PSRP
Teachers

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American Academy of Pediatrics



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HEZEKIAH BEARDSLEY CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jillian G. Wood

Myra Jones-Taylor
Executive Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Ave. Room G29
Hartford, CT 06106

October 8, 2103

Dear Ms. Jones Taylor,

The CT Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is the membership organization for the nearly 1000 primary care and specialty pediatricians in the state. Our mission is to attain optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

It is essential that we support agencies that expand early childhood learning and development of young children. Our members strive to be certain that children receive the finest care and education and that their parents are well informed so that their choices are the best for their child.

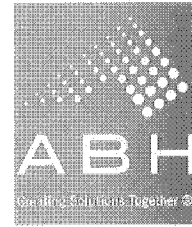
In this regard, we are pleased to support the Race To The Top Early Learning Challenge application. There are several strategies that our members would be willing to support and are currently working on, such as developmental screens for all children.

Please maintain communication with the Chapter so we can connect our members with your strategies. Good luck on your endeavor.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Jillian Wood
Executive Director



October 8, 2013

Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.

Myra Jones-Taylor
Executive Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Ave. Room G29
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Funds

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Early Childhood Consultation Partnership® (ECCP) enthusiastically supports Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood in their application to the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant and the ongoing implementation of Public Act No. 11-181, *"An act concerning early childhood education and the establishment of a coordinated system of early care and education and child development,"* to improve physical, social and mental health outcomes for the state's high needs children.

The Early Childhood Consultation Partnership® (ECCP) program is an innovative and nationally recognized evidenced-based program which provides statewide early childhood mental health consultation services to early care and education providers and families of children ages birth to five. Managed by Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc. (ABH®), ECCP's Master's-level Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants partner with local non-profit behavioral health care agencies to serve more than 3,000 children ages 0-5 across the state each year.

ECCP is notably one of the first statewide, results oriented, data driven Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation programs in the country. The program has clearly articulated outcomes relating to professional development, service delivery of at-risk children and their caregivers, and state and local community networking. ECCP serves as a national model and has influenced policy makers around the social emotional needs of young children, as well as the need to build the capacity of early care and education providers and families through consultation, technical assistance and workforce development activities. ECCP has been highlighted nationally through several studies and publications, such as *the National Center for Children in Poverty's, "Building Comprehensive Supports for Early Childhood Mental Health: A Planning Tool for States; Georgetown University's Study, "What Works? A Study of Effective Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Programs."* Duran, Hepburn, Irvine, Kaufman, Anthony, Horen, and Perry; *"Assessing fidelity for early childhood mental health consultation: Lessons from the field and next steps,"* Roxane K. Kaufmann, Deborah F. Perry, Kathy Hepburn, and Frances Duran; and ECCP served as a resource for National Center for Children in Poverty and Zero To Three Policy Center's *"Strengthening ECMH Supports in Early Care and Education Settings, Strategies for Improving ECMH Supports in Infant-Toddler Settings."*

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www.abhct.com

ECCP works in partnerships at state, local and individual family levels in order to address the social, emotional and behavioral needs of typically underserved high-risk children (e.g. foster children, children with special needs, etc.). We also emphasize the importance of maintaining a workforce that is fully versed in the fields of Early Childhood Mental Health and Early Childhood Education. This is done through ongoing trainings and collaborations with other early childhood partners. ECCP has also participated in the development of CT's Early Learning and Development Standards within the social and emotional domain and ECCP has incorporated these and other fundamentals such as, NAEYC Quality Standards and (Early) Head Start Guidelines into the service delivery model, contributing to a seamless support system.

ECCP is an active partner at both the state and local levels working to improve early childhood delivery systems and outcomes. For example, ECCP:

- Has conducted a needs assessment and developed and distributed more than 100 different Social and Emotional resources to Family Daycare Providers and Infant Toddler teachers in Connecticut.
- Serves as the early childhood mental health experts and provides consultation and services to caregivers of children involved in DCF, Head Start and other early childhood community partners for the DCF Head Start Statewide Collaborative.
- Provides trainings to the DCF Training Academy and for local early care and education providers. Training Topics include social and emotional development, and target the 0-5 population and their caregivers.
- Participates in local early childhood community collaborative groups (e.g. Head Start Boards, School Readiness Councils, Discovery Initiatives, Directors Forums, Help Me Grow Meetings, etc.).
- ECCP is a member of the Steering Committee for the National Zero to Three Project: New Haven's Court Team for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers. This team seeks to improve outcomes for Infants and Toddlers in New Haven area foster care.
- ECCP is on the training steering Committee for Connecticut's Association for Infant Mental Health.

Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative will provide more complete supports for high needs children during their most crucial stages of development. The few examples above demonstrate our commitment to this goal. Through these partnerships, we have played a critical role in designing many of the supports that serve as the foundation that RTT-ELC projects will build on (e.g. our workforce development trainings for early care providers and our provision of early childhood mental health consultation to early care and education settings, as well as our capacity to design centralized data management systems that guide program fidelity and imbedding a practice approach of Results Based Accountability).

ECCP will actively participate in the successful implementation of RTT-ELC projects to create a coordinated, statewide early learning and development system that includes a tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) system, comprehensive Early Learning and Development Standards, data collections, and a well trained workforce. Specifically, ECCP will:

- Support the new Office of Early Childhood Development, Early Care and Education as part of the ongoing implementation of Public Act No. 11-181.
- Provide technical assistance and capacity building tools (e.g. "Tips for Tots" Strategy Resources for families and providers, Action Plans, etc.) for local providers and families through the regional hub system created under RTT-ELC.
- Advocate for maximum participation in the QRIS system among local and regional child care providers and educators.

- Advise on the improvement and coordination of training for early care and education providers in health and mental health standards through participation on the Early Childhood Cabinet's Health Committee.
- Identify effective investments to improve the early screening and mid-level assessment processes.
- Provide ECCP early childhood mental health consultation services to serve children, families and educators through Kindergarten in order to better align Infant Toddler Preschool and Kindergarten requirements within a seamless system of social emotional and behavioral supports from Early Care and Education Centers to Grammar school.

ECCP is excited to be an active partner in the development and implementation of Connecticut's RTT-ELC project. We recognize the capacity of the Office of Early Childhood to successfully partner with other state and local agencies in order to implement a seamless delivery system serving as a steward of the citizens' of Connecticut by acting on behalf of disadvantaged young children. We see the potential this initiative has in creating a strong network that supports positive outcomes for high needs children, their families and service providers.

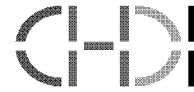
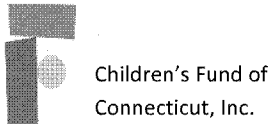
Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Elizabeth Bicio, LCSW
 Director
 Early Childhood Consultation Partnership
 (ECCP®) and Early Childhood Programs
 Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.
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(b)(6)

Samuel Moy, Ph.D.
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Child Health and Development
Institute of Connecticut

October 8, 2013

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Room G31
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Dr. Jones-Taylor:

On behalf of the Children's Fund of CT and its subsidiary, the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI), I am writing to express our strong support for **Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge** grant proposal and affirm our commitment to work with the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) in support of the strategies and projects presented.

The Children's Fund and CHDI are dedicated to promoting and maximizing the healthy physical, behavioral, emotional, cognitive and social development of children throughout Connecticut. We work to ensure that all children in our state, particularly those who are disadvantaged or underserved, will have access to and make use of a comprehensive, effective, community-based health and mental health care system.

CHDI recognizes that the care and education of young children (0-5) has lifelong consequences. Approximately one in four Connecticut children enter kindergarten without the sufficient skills, knowledge or behaviors necessary for academic success. Research has documented that physical and mental health-related issues, alone or in combination, account for all but 6% of these children. In recognition of the role that health plays in ensuring school readiness, CHDI works tirelessly to improve access, integration and impact of early childhood systems by fully addressing healthy development at the local, regional, state and national level.

The Children's Fund and CHDI are deeply committed to helping achieve the ambitious goals outlined in the RTT-ELC proposal to better serve high needs children and prepare them for lifelong learning and wellness. Specifically we intend to work closely with the Office of Early Childhood on the projects that are closely aligned with our mission and goals. These include:

- Improve the identification and referral of high needs children. We have just completed a report entitled *The Earlier the Better: Developmental Screening for Connecticut's Young Children* for the Health Promotions Workgroup of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, which can inform the strategies related to the efforts on screening and connecting children to services outlined in the grant proposal;
- Continue to provide support and technical assistance to expand the system of health and mental health consultation to licensed family and center based child care programs;

- Continue to support over 30 communities through our public/private partnership with the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and the Office of Early Childhood to fully integrate health into their comprehensive early childhood plans;
- Work with the OEC and communities to improve efforts at collecting and tracking data from the Child Health Assessment Forms completed for all children in licensed early care and education programs and eventually integrate this information in the Early Childhood Information System. These forms are a rich source of vital information that can help inform and improve services and systems for young children.
- Continue to support the CT Association for Infant Mental Health in the development of a workforce competent in promoting social and emotional development and meeting the mental health challenges of young children and their families;
- Through our EPIC program (Educating Practices in the Community), continue to train child health providers in developmental and behavioral screening and add a module for health providers on collaborating effectively with early care and education providers, using health consultants and coaches to child care as the key liaisons, funded in part by CT's new ECCS grant;
- Continue to support the expansion of a model of midlevel assessments as a way of providing timely, accessible and cost-effective supports for children who screen positive for developmental concerns.

In addition to these efforts through CHDI are those of the Children's Fund of Connecticut (CFC), our public charitable foundation. CFC has been a founding member of the Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative and we pledge to continue our contribution to help support the operations of a coordinated early childhood system. This is but one of many ways in which we contribute to supporting the systems that serve young children in the state. We have committed close to \$1 million for this purpose in the past two years alone.

There is no doubt that Connecticut has made major strides in its development of an early childhood system over the past two years, exemplified by the creation of the Office for Early Childhood and advances in developing a QRIS system. CT has moved far from the back of the pack and is poised to be among the leaders. I have no doubt that an RTT-ELC grant would provide the essential resources and recognition to make sure we not only arrive there but also stay there. With exemplary and fully supportive legislative and executive branch leadership, there is no better time for the federal government to be investing in Connecticut and its youngest citizens.

CHDI and the Children's Fund will continue to be a strong and dedicated partner in working toward the success of this grant, and more important, to building and maintaining a quality early childhood system that meets the needs of all children in our state.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Judith C. Meyers, PhD.
President and CEO
Children's Fund of CT and
Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut



Engaging, Educating and Mobilizing Parents
to Act on Children's Issues

October 8, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy,

On behalf of over 3286 Connecticut Parent Power members, we would like to share how deeply committed we are to Connecticut's Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge application, which proposes to increase the number of children with high needs who are enrolled in high quality early learning and development programs statewide.

Connecticut Parent Power (CTPP) is a statewide parent led membership and advocacy organization committed to improving developmental outcomes in the areas of early childhood care/education, healthcare reform, and PreK-12th grade school systems. CTPP was founded in 2001 as a parent networking opportunity to secure funding that goes beyond the scope of just engaging parents to educating them with timely information, then mobilizing them to play an active role in solution based thinking and actions that has since grown to become the go-to parent organization for information sharing, networking, policy development, and advocacy.

As you know, many times our high needs children living in poverty, children with disabilities, and children who are English language learners are left behind to play catch up at various ages and stages of development. Currently, about half of the children with high needs in publically-funded early learning and development programs are in programs of unknown quality, which is unacceptable. Changing this is a crucial element of Connecticut's efforts to shrink its expansive achievement gap that will be accomplished hand in hand with our parents, providers, teachers and stakeholders who care about children issues.

As parents and the first and most influential teachers of our most precious gifts, our children, we believe that all children need high quality early learning experiences especially during the early years, from birth to early elementary school, in order to have the best chance of reaching their fullest potential. All children, regardless of income, circumstances or geography, deserve this opportunity. The State should ensure that high needs children, in particular, has access to high quality programs from birth through kindergarten entry in all types of settings (home-based, centers and schools).

The establishment of the Office of Early Childhood will serve our state as a national model to provide a family-friendly coordinated one stop system that would truly provide support services for our children. Connecticut Parent Power is determined to accomplish these goals through collective efforts that include engaging parents from the very beginning to ensure collective impact is positive for all with the following:

CT Parent Power 110 Bartholomew Ave, Suite 4030, Hartford, CT 06106 (860) 951-2212 ext. 273
marilyn@ctparentpower.org www.ctparentpower.org info@ctparentpower.org

- 1) **Statewide Systems Building**, this involves implementing a statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, ConneCT to Quality (C2Q): Connecticut's Early Learning Quality System
- 2) **High Quality for High Needs**, which involves implementing related policies and initiatives to increase the number and percentage of children with high needs attending high quality early learning and development programs of all types and increasing their readiness for Kindergarten.

CTPP is excited to know that Connecticut will begin to implement a well researched and carefully designed C2Q that will incorporate a strong statewide technical assistance network that will professionally develop structures that will support the early childhood workforce, which is the foundational glue to ensuring that no child is ever left behind. This includes a broad based screening effort to identify children with special needs earlier.

CTPP dedicated staff will work collectively to support implementation of the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge proposal by specifically:

1. Fostering communication with grassroots relationships that include parents, providers, faith-based partners and constituents who care about children's issues and share feedback with the Office of Early Childhood to ensure that all systems are reflective of the needs of parents and community members;
2. Engaging, educating and mobilizing parents/constituents from across the state to take action, when necessary, to support the successful implementation of the proposal;
3. Cultivating meaningful relationships with legislators and representatives, while informing them of key elements of the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Proposal that will bring about a shared vision for all children to accomplish optimal levels of success that will close the achievement gap;
4. Information sharing in timely manner to parents to ensure that they are able to make informed decisions with the implementation process of a system that works for all children to receive quality care/education, and to gain RTT-ELC funding that will significantly help us to achieve the following objectives: (a) information sharing to parents/families, (b) provide families with information about the importance of quality and (c) rating system of programs, (d) provide all families with options that are of high quality no matter if they receive public funding or not, which (e) will create targeted information campaign encouraging families to select quality programs for all programs and providers who have contact with families of high needs children.

Together these plans will help ensure that more children receive quality early care and education, more parents receive sound information to guide their choices, which CTPP is committed to attaining, hand in hand, through effective and timely coordination and collaboration of all parents, partners and stakeholders in our state to attain the best for our most vulnerable, our precious children.

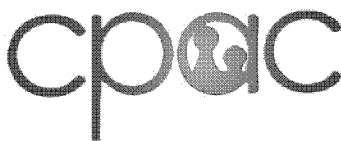
Connecticut Parent Power embraces the strategies to create an Early Childhood Partnership Council to connect to local communities, resource/referral for high needs families (care coordination at 211 child care), work with universities on an early childhood research agenda, and placing a substantial amount of attention to licensed family child care providers and unlicensed family, friend and neighbor care, two settings that provide care to our most vulnerable children, as preventive measures are key.

Connecticut Parent Power is honored to be working with such a dynamic team of leaders in Connecticut that are all excited about the possibilities we can further attain and sustain with the Connecticut's Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge initiative to improve outcomes for children from diverse walks of life.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Marilyn Calderón
Executive Director
Connecticut Parent Power



Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc.

Main Office:
338 Main Street • Niantic, CT 06357
(860)-739-3089
(800) 445-2722 Toll Free

Satellite Offices:
Danbury Children First
83 West Street • Danbury, CT 06810

Fair Haven Community Health Center
374 Grand Avenue • New Haven, CT 06513

October 9, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

On behalf of the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), I am pleased to write this letter of support for CT's application for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) competition. We believe that Connecticut is uniquely poised to utilize this funding to support our coordinated efforts through the new Office of Early Childhood. (OEC) The Office of Early Childhood has a dynamic plan for expanding and enhancing access to high quality early education programs for all young children throughout Connecticut. We believe this funding is critical to creating a comprehensive and responsive statewide system that will significantly improve developmental outcomes for all young children.

The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) has served as Connecticut's statewide, federally funded parent training and information center (PTIC) for the past thirty years. We have provided training, information and support to thousands of families who have children with any disability or chronic illness, from birth through age 26 and the community providers who work with them. CPAC has always been committed to reaching and serving families who have the greatest barriers to accessing information and support and whose children are at risk for success due to their disabilities. As a member of the external stakeholder group providing input into proposal development, we appreciate that others share this commitment and have focused on high needs children throughout the proposed plan.

CPAC parent staff and Board members serve on numerous statewide and local committees to ensure a strong voice is always at the table for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families. CPAC's advocacy and involvement at the state, regional, and local level represents the needs of children with disabilities and their families in accessing opportunities that will promote positive developmental outcomes and help close CT's persistent achievement gap. We know the gap begins to widen early on and recognize that access to a high quality system of early care and education can be most successful in narrowing the gap, especially at kindergarten entry for children with disabilities. We are especially pleased to see that high quality, early care opportunities for children with disabilities will be expanded and enhanced through the work proposed in this Early Learning Challenge grant.

www.cpacinc.org

CPAC will help to ensure that Connecticut's RTT-ELC project meets the needs of all young children, ages birth to five, including those with disabilities and their parents by:

- providing accessible information to parents and providers via a toll-free phone number, through e-mail, and/on our website;
- making bi-lingual staff available to assist parents and provide translated materials;
- providing in-service training and technical assistance to community based early intervention and early childhood programs on topics such as: family involvement; parent-professional partnerships; inclusion of children with disabilities and special health care needs, including the provision of individualized accommodations and modifications; and cultural competence, among other topics;
- providing information, support and assistance to the families of young children with disabilities to help them advocate for their children to make sure their child's needs are met across the range of early childhood options and opportunities that are available; and
- promoting access to high-quality early learning and development programs for children with disabilities by contributing to the development and implementation of policies at the state, regional, and local levels.

We have seen firsthand in Connecticut, the positive outcomes that are realized when young children, including children with disabilities, have access to high quality early intervention and preschool services. We firmly believe this new funding will allow our state to create a model statewide system that will ensure we improve the outcomes of many more of our young children with the highest needs in order to provide equitable opportunities for success for all children. We look forward to supporting you in this critical endeavor,

Yours truly

(b)(6)

Nancy B. Prescott
Executive Director
CT Parent Advocacy Center



CT Parent Information and Resource Center

Centro de Recursos e Información Para Padres de CT

October 9, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC), to express support for, and commitment to, Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant submission. The efforts put forward by this application will increase high-quality educational opportunities for Connecticut's young children and their families, including those with high needs.

CT PIRC's goal is to improve parents' access to information and resources regarding their children's education. CT PIRC works to establish a statewide system for the implementation of successful and effective family engagement and involvement policies, programs, and activities. CT PIRC is coordinated by the Connecticut State Education Resource Center (SERC), a professional development agency. CT PIRC builds on a history of well-documented success, evidenced by national recognition from the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) as a Partnership State Award winner in 2000 and 2005, and on the statewide leadership and infrastructure in school-family-community partnerships.

CT PIRC maximizes the impact of community, state, and federal resources by collaborating with partners including the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Capitol Region Conference of Churches, CT's Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), Head Start, the CT Commission on Children, Even Start, the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), and the Family Resource Center Alliance, among others. CT PIRC focuses in particular on serving high-need black and Hispanic families with the goal of providing targeted assistance to communities where there are significant achievement gaps along racial lines.

Therefore, this letter signifies our support regarding the State of Connecticut's application for participation in the federal *Race to the Top- Early Childhood Challenge*. We fully support the goals of the state's plan, including:

- Increase the quality of programs currently serving high needs children;

25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1520

1-800-842-8678 ♦ www.ctpirc.org



CT Parent Information and Resource Center

Centro de Recursos e Información Para Padres de CT

Page 2

Governor Malloy

October 9, 2013

- Increase access to high quality programs for families of high needs children; and
- Create a system to support quality and access agenda for high needs children.

We commend the State of Connecticut for the leadership and efforts already demonstrated in recent years to create and expand through the newly established Office of Early Childhood and the capacity of early childhood systems in Connecticut to enhance the quality of all types of early learning and development programs for Connecticut children. Moreover, we advocate their aggressive yet achievable plan for implementation - coherent, compelling, and comprehensive approach that can set a transformational example for other states throughout the country.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Ingrid M. Canady
Assistant Director for Program Development
Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC)

25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1520

1-800-842-8678 ♦ www.ctpirc.org



John R. Rathgeber
President and Chief Executive Officer

October 8, 2013

The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
State Capitol
210 Capitol Ave.
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

I am writing to express the strong support of the Connecticut Business and Industry Association for Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative.

There is perhaps nothing more important to Connecticut's future than the wellbeing of our children and their access to the best possible start in life. One of our highest duties as citizens is to make sure that every child receives a solid educational foundation from an early age. CBIA firmly believes that Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative is key to providing that foundation and preparing Connecticut's children for the high-wage, high-skills, high promise jobs of tomorrow.

CBIA is Connecticut's largest business trade association with about 10,000 members representing every business sector and region within our state. CBIA believes that Connecticut's economic competitiveness is dependent upon a highly skilled workforce, one that can drive innovation and productivity. Graduating high school students who are ready for college or advanced technical education and closing the state's achievement gap are priorities that we share with your administration. A coordinated system of quality early childhood care and education is critical to achieving these goals.

Research, and common sense, instructs us that children who are provided quality early learning experiences have much better potential for success throughout school and life than those who arrive at kindergarten underprepared and already behind in their education.

That is why, as you know, we have been actively involved in both the policy debate on public education reform and in numerous district or school-based initiatives. We also have been integrally involved in early childhood care and education planning through my service as the immediate past chair of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet. During my tenure as chair, we realigned the Cabinet's efforts and its committees (Data, Workforce, Early Learning Standards, and Family Supports) to reflect your commitment to building a truly integrated system. These improvements laid the foundation for Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative.

Another landmark achievement that we were proud to support with you was the creation of the Office of Early Care and Education and Child Development. This new office will provide Connecticut with its first comprehensive, collaborative system for delivering improved programs and services, ultimately transforming how Connecticut provides childhood care. CBIA

350 Church Street, Hartford, CT 06103-1126 | 860.244.1900 | 860.278.8562 (f) | cbia.com

recognizes the central role the Office will play in Connecticut's RTT-ELC efforts that are focused on:

- Expanding the capacity of early childhood systems in Connecticut and significantly improving their quality
- Implementing "ConneCT to Quality: Connecticut's Early Learning Quality System (C2Q)" to make sure that every young person is receiving the very best of care
- Widening the participation of high needs children in top quality early learning and development programs
- Supporting these efforts through a fully coordinated and integrated information system—the Early Childhood Information System

We are confident that these initiatives will help accomplish your goal of setting a foundation for our young people that they will be able to build on their entire lives. Connecticut businesses share this goal not only because employers must have a skilled, prepared workforce in order to compete and succeed in the 21st century economy, but also because businesses realize that offering quality early education is imperative to sustaining the excellent quality of life their employees and families depend on.

CBIA will continue to promote the efforts of your administration, particularly through the Office of Early Care and Education and Child Development, by educating our members about the RTT-ELC initiative, reaching out to the state's news media and general public about the initiative's importance, and facilitating links to private and philanthropic resources to ensure long-term success.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with your administration to implement this vitally important initiative.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

John K. Rathgeber

✓ cc: Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor

October 8, 1013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Re: Connecticut's application for Race to the Top

The Connecticut Workforce Development Council strongly supports Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, to position more of Connecticut's young children to achieve academic, employment, and economic success.

The Connecticut Workforce Development Council (CWDC) strives to develop a competitive workforce to meet the current and future needs of the state's employers by creating opportunities through education, training and job readiness. The Boards of Directors of all five regional Workforce Investment Boards are led by business executives and include education and community leaders to assure that workforce investment policy is directed toward the real jobs in the state economy. The leadership and participation of a broad spectrum of businesses helps ensure our services and programs are relevant to our customers, today and in the future.

CWDC enthusiastically supports Connecticut's RTT-ELC proposals to improve the quality of early learning to close the achievement gap for children with high needs. We understand that healthy and prepared young children become successful students, and eventually become productive workers and citizens. We are also pleased to see expanded access to and integration of early care educator workforce training and the Early Childhood Teacher Credential, especially among family and informal childcare providers. In support of these initiatives, CWDC will:

- Support the creation of the Office of Early Care and Education and Child Development to improve coordination of state agency programs and facilitate better inter-agency cooperation, including data sharing protocols;
- Promote access to high-quality early care programs among WIB clients (including educating students about information available through the Quality Rating and Improvement System);
- Make our training facilities available for professional development trainings, subject to availability, particularly for family caregivers, kith and kin;
- Promote training, credentialing (e.g., Child Development Associate), and careers in early education;
- Inform our business and community partners about the RTT-ELC initiative and its important role in developing a stronger workforce;

As the statewide association of Workforce Investment Boards, the CWDC is uniquely positioned help shape Connecticut's economic future. Connecticut's RTT-ELC application will make important strides forward to ensure our early care and education workforce provides the high quality care our children need to place them on the path of academic and economic success. We look forward to working with you to achieve these goals.

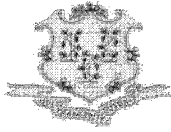
Sincerely,

(b)(6)

William P. Villano
President and CEO, Workforce Alliance
Chair, Connecticut Workforce Development Council



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE
999 ASYLUM AVENUE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06105



Sarah Healy Eagan, JD
Acting Child Advocate

October 10, 2013

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Executive Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Ave., Room G29
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Dr. Jones-Taylor:

The Office of the Child Advocate has a vested interest in the successful work of various state agencies that are working with high need young children. This Office is charged with the obligation to oversee the protection and care of Connecticut's most vulnerable and youngest citizens and advocate for their well-being. See Connecticut General Statutes Sections 46a-13k et seq. To that end, the Office of the Child Advocate is an avid supporter of the state's effort to strengthen and build infrastructure that can meet the developmental and educational needs of our very young children. The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge and the Connecticut application rightly emphasize the need to strengthen linkages between multiple state, local and privately-run agencies that serve children and their families. Connecticut's creation of an Office of Early Childhood is an essential development in the state's strategic plan to ensure the well-being of our young children and their families.

Connecticut's Race to the Top proposal necessarily places great emphasis on finding our high need families and their children and ensuring appropriate referrals. The Office of Early Childhood brings together multiple child-serving agencies that can work together across systems to efficiently engage with families of young children, coordinate referral systems and streamline access to essential services.

The creation of an Office of Early Childhood is only the latest example of this state's recognition that productive adults and healthy families arise out of healthy starts. Over the last few years, Connecticut passed critical legislation to assist with identifying high-need young children and increasing their access to developmental and educational support services. In 2012 Public Act 12-53 was enacted, providing that all individual case plans submitted to a state court on behalf of an abused or neglected child must document whether that child has been evaluated for early intervention services, is enrolled in an early

childhood education program, or has been screened to determine eligibility for special education services.

In 2013, the Connecticut legislature enacted Public Act 13-234, Section 154, requiring the state child welfare agency ensure that every child under 36 months of age who is substantiated as abused or neglected be screened for developmental *and* social-emotional delays using validated tools such as the Ages and Stages and the Ages and Stages-Social/Emotional Questionnaires. Moreover, the Act requires that such screens be administered *at least every six months*; that children who screen “positive” be promptly referred to the state’s Birth to Three program for full evaluation, and that those children who are found not eligible for services be referred to Connecticut’s prevention-focused “Help Me Grow” service. The Act also requires that the state child welfare agency produce an annual report documenting the numbers of children referred to Birth to Three, the eligibility rates and the domains of eligibility. This reporting requirement will provide necessary information about the efficacy of the screening and referral processes as well as deliver critical information about where services need to be grown. Finally, the Act phases in a requirement that all young children referred to the state’s Differential Response prevention program but who are *not* substantiated as victims of abuse or neglect will be screened for developmental and social-emotional delays and be subsequently referred to early intervention services. These statutory reforms, embraced by state legislative leadership, will ensure essential developmental screening for *thousands* of our most vulnerable infants and toddlers. Historically approximately three thousand children under thirty-six months of age have been substantiated as victims of abuse or neglect each year. Assisting families with understanding their children’s needs and connecting caregivers with family strengthening support services is a critical step in improving outcomes for high-need young children.

As a corollary to this initiative, the state legislature enacted a new law in 2013 seeking to “Raise the Grade” for children living in child welfare custody. See Public Act 13-234, Sections 123-124. The “Raise the Grade” legislation includes a focus on promoting achievement for children ages 3 to 5 by requiring annual reports to the statewide Achievement Gap Taskforce regarding the academic progress and enrollment of preschool age children in state care.

These innovative legislative reforms are already being embraced and operationalized by the state’s creative state agency teams and child welfare leadership. Connecticut DCF has also been actively working for several years to improve access to evidence-based support services for at risk young children. For example, DCF has provided essential financial support for the innovative Child FIRST program, an evidence-based dyadic intervention for young children and their caregivers. State funding has allowed Child FIRST to greatly increase capacity to serve high need families. DCF is also an active partner with Connecticut Head Start programs to increase children’s access to quality early childhood education programs.

These inter-agency efforts will encourage healthy starts and healthy futures for our children. The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood is now positioned to build on and complement this work by implementing the state’s strategic plan to ensure universal access to quality early care for young children.

As part of our mission, the Office of the Child Advocate will actively support the state's multi-agency efforts to safeguard the developmental and educational needs of abused, neglected or other high-risk young children. OCA can support this important work through public and professional education, reports to state lawmakers, as well as through sustained advocacy and focus on the special needs of this vulnerable population.

The OCA has a productive working relationship with the Office of Early Childhood. The OEC, by virtue of being a reform-minded agency that consolidates much of the critical early childhood work done in the state, is uniquely positioned to implement our cohesive and well-designed strategy to ensure the quality of our early childhood program and most importantly increase access to these programs for our most needy young citizens.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Sarah Healy Eagan, JD
Acting Child Advocate



October 7, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
 State Capitol
 210 Capitol Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy,

As the current Chairperson of the RESC Alliance, it is my pleasure to offer a letter of support for Connecticut's Race to the Top application. The Office of Early Childhood provides the infrastructure and capacity to implement a statewide early childhood system that ensures that all children enter Kindergarten ready for learning. Funding from this grant will expand the capacity of the early childhood systems in Connecticut to engage children who are not participating in quality programs or services. The grant will enhance the quality of all learning environments to ensure that children with high needs in Connecticut have access to high quality programs.

The regional educational service centers are acutely aware that in order to reach this goal, we must provide teachers with strong evidenced based professional development opportunities paired with coaching support. We specifically support the Office of Early Childhood's work to enhance the quality of our early childhood professional development system through competency based design. Aligning Connecticut's professional development for our workforce using a competency based professional development system in collaboration with higher education and myriad additional organizations will advance the work for children and their families. Also, the assessment efforts in the grant will help us to know if our efforts are making a difference in children's learning and lives. We also support the QRIS system that will increase the number of nationally accredited early learning centers in CT. The RESCs are directly involved in providing support and guidance to programs seeking accreditation. We will be able to provide and host numerous training opportunities that will support this goal.



The work of the Office of Early Childhood and its partners will help children receive quality care and education, increase the number of families that will receive accurate information with which to make decisions and choices and, benefit providers in enhancing their skills and programs. The RESC Alliance and its partners look forward to supporting the implementation of these initiatives to support high quality educational experiences for all children from pre-school to grade three.

Respectfully,

(b)(6)

Eileen S. Howley, Ed.D.
 RESC Alliance Chair, Executive Director, LEARN,
 On behalf of the RESC Alliance

Danuta Thibodeau, Ph.D., Executive Director, EDUCATION CONNECTION

Bruce Douglas, Ph.D., Executive Director, CRES

Paula Colen, Executive Director, EASTCONN

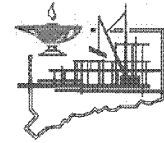
Evan Pitkoff, Ed.D., Executive Director, CES

Craig Edmondson, Ed.D., Executive Director, ACES





CONNECTICUT HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL
FACILITIES AUTHORITY



October 14, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge funds

This letter confirms the commitment of the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) to support the success of Connecticut's young children through participation in Connecticut's Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative and the ongoing implementation of Public Act No. 11-181, "*An act concerning early childhood education and the establishment of a coordinated system of early care and education and child development*," including the creation of Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood through Executive Order No. 11.

CHEFA is a quasi-public authority created to help Connecticut-based non-profit organizations raise the funds needed to meet their goals of improving the health and education of the State's citizens through low-cost financing in the public municipal markets. Formed in 1965, CHEFA currently has in excess of \$7.9 billion in bonds outstanding. Childcare providers (along with hospitals, institutions of higher education, independent schools, cultural institutions, and human service providers) have benefited from this financing to expand their physical plant and equipment and increase services to the children and families they serve.

Connecticut's goal, as stated in the RTT-ELC application is to "increase the percentage of the children with high needs who are enrolled in high-quality early learning and development programs by 50%." An important component of any expansion plan must include the development and/or renovation of quality early education facilities. Through the State's landmark School Readiness Legislation (Public Act 97-259), CHEFA collaborated with the Department of Social Services and State Department of Education to develop three loan programs to finance quality spaces for early education. One of these, the Tax-Exempt Loan Program, has become the principal engine generating early care facilities for low-income children in Connecticut. Seventy-six million dollars have been invested to provide over 5,100 spaces through this program. Each of the facilities is required to demonstrate its commitment to quality by being accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Recognizing the importance of systems planning in early education, the Authority has consistently supported State efforts with funding and technical support. In 2006, CHEFA provided a \$200,000 grant to support the work of the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council; in 2007, CHEFA developed a statewide facility plan for early education pursuant to Special Session Public Act 07-03; in 2008, the Early Education Cost Estimate web-based tool was launched; in 2010 CHEFA approved financial support of \$985,000 for the Connecticut Data Collaborative project; and in 2012, CHEFA updated its Statewide Facility Plan for Early Education.

10 Columbus Boulevard • Hartford, CT 06106-1978
Tel: (860) 520-4700 • Fax (860) 520-4706
www.chefa.com

CHEFA has reviewed a summary document describing Connecticut's RTT-ELC application, and firmly supports the priorities of the proposed project, especially supporting the phase out of license exemptions for programs operated in public schools. CHEFA will support RTT-ELC efforts by continuing to support childcare center facility improvement and expansion. Specifically, CHEFA commits to:

- **Phase out license exemptions for programs operated in and by public schools-** The Tax-Exempt Financing program is available to municipalities and boards of education. In fact, two of the completed projects are owned by municipalities. CHEFA will gladly work with the state to provide the necessary funding to bring license exempt classrooms up to licensing standards;
- **Increase access to high quality programs for children living in communities that do not include priority or competitive school districts with school readiness or Head Start-** Satisfying the requirements of Public Act 12-16, CHEFA staff has updated a statewide facility plan, which estimates underserved high-risk populations across the state. CHEFA will continue to work with the Office of Early Childhood to refine these numbers, and develop approaches to increase the supply of quality early education in underserved areas;
- **Participate in the ConneCT to Quality rating and improvement system-** CHEFA developed facilities were among the first state-supported programs to require NAEYC accreditation. Continuing our commitment to quality, CHEFA will support our clients in obtaining the highest tier rating, providing financial resources needed for facility improvements;
- **Implement a quality rating and improvement module in the Early Childhood Information System-** CHEFA has supported preliminary funding of the Connecticut Data Collaborative, providing over \$900k for its first two years of operation. In collaboration with the United Way of Connecticut (which manages the 2-1-1 information system), the Collaborative has deployed an open-source solution to present and visualize data for public access. CHEFA will continue to work with the Data Collaborative to maximize public access of early education data.

CHEFA reiterates its support for Connecticut's RTT-ELC application and looks forward to hearing of its award and working towards its success.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Jeffrey A. Asher

Executive Director, Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority

(b)(6)



where great stories begin™

REACH OUT AND READ CONNECTICUT

October 4, 2013

The Honorable Daniel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

On behalf of Reach Out and Read Connecticut, I am writing in strong support of the state's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative to achieve dramatic increases in the percentage of high-need children who have high-quality early learning and developmental experiences.

Children who start out with reading difficulties are more likely to ultimately fail in school. Without interventions very early in life, they will grow into adults with low literacy skills and poor economic potential. The research on children living in poverty is clear: they are at the highest risk for reading failure as:

- they hear as many as 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers before the age of 3;
- by kindergarten, they are typically 12-14 months below national norms in language and pre-reading skills;
- Sixty-one percent do not have children's books at home; being read aloud to is the single most important activity leading to literacy acquisition and eventual reading success;
- They are three time more likely to drop out or fail to graduate from high school than their more affluent peers if they are not reading proficiently by third grade.

Due to the structure and evidence-based outcomes of our program, Reach Out and Read most strongly aligns with the state's proposal by providing increased access to high-quality programs for families of high-need children as well as increasing parental engagement and education for families. Where Reach Out and Read is delivered within the existing healthcare infrastructure, our model provides us with near universal, repeated, one-on-one access to all children and families including these hard to reach, high-risk children and their parents. Therefore, our providers can be early-literacy mentors for children and families who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

Specifically, Reach Out and Read uses an evidence-based approach to combat these threats to low-income children and families by partnering with pediatricians. Reach Out and Read trains doctors in the latest available research surrounding best practices in early-literacy development, emergent literacy promotion, and its application within the primary care visit. During well-child visits, our doctors use this knowledge to give parents anticipatory guidance about the importance of reading aloud, and give children a brand new book to take home and keep. For many of the low-income children we serve, Reach Out and Read books are the only books they own. Fifteen independent, published research studies support the efficacy of our program.

The 39,939 Connecticut families served by Reach Out and Read read together more often, and their children enter kindergarten better prepared to succeed, with larger vocabularies, stronger language skills, and a six-month developmental edge over their peers. Last year, 69 pediatric healthcare providers distributed over 65,000 new books through our three-part model:

www.reachoutandread.org

6 Fern Lane • Madison, CT • 06443 t 203-980-6430 e christine.garber@reachoutandread.org

Reach Out and Read Connecticut is a program of reachoutandread.org  



1. In the exam room, trained providers speak with parents about the importance of reading aloud to their young children every day, and offer age-appropriate tips and encouragement;
2. The child receives a new, culturally- and developmentally-appropriate book to take home and keep;
3. Parents incorporate the advice and encouragement they receive in pediatric visits and make reading aloud a daily, enjoyable experience between parent and child;

This RTT-ELC initiative will improve educational outcomes for Connecticut's children through the development of a coordinated, statewide, early learning and development system that includes a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, ConneCT to Quality (C2Q), and increase the number and percentage of children with high-needs attending high-quality early learning and development programs to ensure kindergarten readiness. Reach Out and Read will work diligently to ensure the successful implementation of these projects by:

- Providing support and integration into RTT-ELC capacity and quality building efforts for literacy programs;
- Advising and assisting in connecting early learning literacy programs (0-pre-k) and early elementary literacy programs (K-3) to ensure RTT-ELC impacts are sustained after age 5;
- Disseminating information to parents about C2Q and high-quality, early learning programs available;
- Incorporating new state data protocols for integrated data collection and evaluation;
- Facilitating connections to private and philanthropic resources as appropriate;
- Enhancing the quality of current Connecticut Reach Out and Read Programs by providing 100% of the books needed to sustain each program annually which, in turn, will enhance the outcomes for the children, better preparing them for kindergarten;
- Expanding our Reach Out and Read programs in Connecticut to reach additional children living in poverty. According to Annie E. Casey's KID'S COUNT 2000 data, there are nearly 200,000 children in Connecticut living with income <200% FPL.

Connecticut's newly created Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is well positioned to serve as a strong, centralized, governing structure to realize the objectives of the state's RTT-ELC proposal. With this new structure in place, coupled with the high-quality plans detailed in the state's RTT-ELC proposal, Reach Out and Read Connecticut believes that our state is well positioned to make significant strides in closing the achievement gap and ensuring all of our youngest children are prepared for lasting school and life success. We look forward to supporting Connecticut's OEC and participating agencies in this important work and continuing our partnership to support all children, families, and citizens across the state.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Christine Garber
Reach Out and Read
Connecticut Program Director



October 3, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
 State Capitol
 210 Capitol Avenue
 Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds

The Connecticut Family Resource Center Alliance enthusiastically supports the state's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative to improve academic, physical, social, and mental health outcomes for the state's high needs children and to improve the quality of early learning programs statewide.

Family Resource Center (FRC) is a systemic approach to comprehensive, integrated, community-based family support and child development services located in 72 public school buildings. This model is based on the "Schools of the 21st Century" concept developed by Dr. Edward Zigler of Yale University. We provide access, within a community, to a broad continuum of early childhood and family support services that foster the optimal development of children and families.

Our 72 school-based Centers collaborate with a multitude of resources in their communities, including private child-care providers, School Readiness Councils, Before/After Childcare Providers and service providers of the State Departments of Social Services and Children and Families to name a few. Statewide, our Centers serve approximately 15,000 children annually, many of whom are low-income, English language learners, developmentally and/or physically disabled, or have other high needs.

A key feature of FRCs is our customization of services following a community needs assessment. We provide direct services as well as referrals for families and children and effectively respond to changes within our schools and communities over the years. We have kept pace with demographic changes and employ linguistically and culturally diverse staff, thereby enhancing our ability to work with immigrant families and assist school staff with translation and understanding how cultural variations influence school-family relations. Seventy-seven percent of the FRCs have bilingual staff and, as a group, staff members are fluent in 15 languages, with two-thirds of them fluent in Spanish.

Healthy development and good education begin with access to quality childcare and support services from birth. In response, FRC is committed to providing high-quality services in collaboration with local partners:

- **Quality Full-Day Child Care and School Readiness Programs:** These services are offered year-round for children ages 3-5 on a sliding fee scale. Centers must be licensed by the Connecticut Department of Public Health and have NAEYC or equivalent accreditation. Our model offers preschool programs with operating hours that are consistent with parents' schedules, and family support and child-care services can be administered by the school or by community-based agencies on behalf of the school. These innovations help ensure that parents can access services when they need them.
- **Adult Education:** This component offers a range of adult education opportunities, including parent training and adult education, support and educational services to parents with children who are participants of the child-care services of the program. Parents and their preschool-age children may attend classes together in parenting and child-rearing skills so as to promote the mutual pursuit of education while enhancing parent-child interaction.
- **School-Age Child Care** This component is offered for children enrolled in school up to the age of 12 for before and after regular school hours and on a full-day basis during school holidays and school vacation. Over 500 statewide businesses rely on the FRC childcare program to support their employees.

- **Resource and Referral Services:** Centers serve as a primary resource and referral service for issues concerning the well being of families. Collaboration with local and state agencies provides families with the supports they need, when they need them.
- **Families in Training:** A nationally approved, evidence-based home visitation program is the foundation of family support in the FRCs. Early intervention child development screening tools are used to identify and refer children with developmental or social/emotional needs.
- We also provide community support services and programs to expectant parents and parents of children under the age of 3 (e.g. information and advice to parents on their child's language, cognitive, social and motor development, gathering new parents together, and providing referrals to parents who need special assistance or services.
- **Support and Training for Family Day-Care Providers:** We offer training and technical assistance and other support to family providers in the community, serve as an information and referral system for other childcare needs, and/or coordinate existing systems in the community.
- **Positive Youth Development:** This component provides programs to adolescents emphasizing responsible decision-making and communication skills. Aimed at children in Grades 4 through 6, it offers a range of opportunities that help prevent an array of childhood and adolescent problems.

Our goal is to work towards a minimum of one FRC per school district targeting high needs families and children. In addition to our strong partnerships with local and state agencies, FRCs leverage private and community-based funding streams, and use an extensive volunteer corps, who provide approximately 2,800 hours of service per month statewide.

The FRC Alliance is excited that Connecticut's RTT-ELC initiative will strengthen and improve supports for high needs children during their most crucial stages of development. The coordination of state level efforts through the new Office of Early Care and Education and Child Development, development of a Quality Rating and Improvement System for providers (that includes technical assistance resources), increased access to early care education career ladders, refinement of the Kindergarten Inventory assessment, and development of an integrated data collection and monitoring system combine to create an impressive infrastructure of system supports for children, their families, their caregivers and educators, and the broader early learning community.

The examples of our services above demonstrate our commitment to these ambitious goals. We have played a critical role in designing many of the supports that serve as the foundation that RTT-ELC projects will build on (e.g. connecting with and supporting family care providers, kith and kin). FRC will actively participate in the successful implementation of these critical RTT-ELC projects in the following ways:

- Support and collaborate with the Office of Early Childhood Development, Early Care and Education
- Participate in the development of a comprehensive tiered QRIS (including possible participation on the Early Childhood Cabinet's new QRIS Task Force as appropriate;
- Advocate for maximum participation the QRIS among local and regional child care providers and educators, including family caregivers, kith and kin;
- Integrate RTT-ELC systems into district programs, including School Based Health Centers and literacy programs;
- Connect early learning literacy programs (0-pre-K) and early elementary literacy programs (K-3) to ensure RTT-ELC impacts are sustained after age 5;
- Promote understanding of the Early Learning Standards among fellow providers (including family care providers, kith and kin), parents, and the communities in which we operate;
- Promote awareness of workforce training opportunities (e.g. the Early Childhood Teacher Credential program) among FRC staff, other providers, and family caregivers;

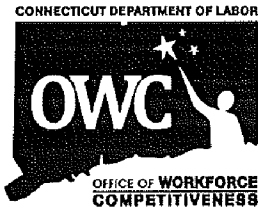
- Incorporate new state data protocols for integrated data collection and evaluation;
- Continue to provide a support network that is essential in preventing mental health problems and enhancing families' abilities to cope with stressful situations;
- Facilitate connections to private and philanthropic resources as appropriate; and
- Undertake a cost-effective approach to the provision of services by identifying service gaps, provide missing services and also by contributing to the effectiveness of other local and state efforts.

FRC is excited to be an active partner in the development and implementation of Connecticut's RTT-ELC project and the potential this initiative has to improve the network of supports for high needs children, their families, and the early learning community.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Catherine R. Battista
President, CT Family Resource Center Alliance



October 8, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds

The Connecticut Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) is pleased to support Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative.

As the state's principal workforce development policy agency, the OWC:

- Facilitates and convenes various federal, state and local entities involved in workforce development issues;
- Provides staff support to the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission (CETC - a public/private partnership that oversees the development of statewide workforce development policy);
- Oversees implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

The OWC is dedicated to implementing A Talent-Based Strategy that will keep Connecticut competitive regionally, nationally and globally in the 21st century and beyond. Improving early childhood learning and development outcomes will help ensure that youth are better equipped to find high-wage, high-skill jobs in the future. We fully support the Office of Early Childhood's work to enhance the quality of our early childhood professional development system.

We are committed to assisting in the successful implementation of these projects. Specifically, OWC will:

- Provide labor market information as requested to assist with early childhood professional development planning; and
- Assist in the provision of information to families regarding early childhood education to promote long-term project success as appropriate.

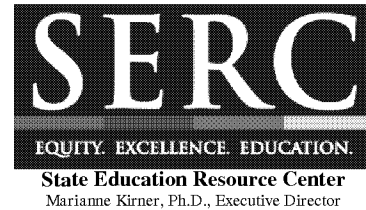
We estimate the value of these contributions to the RTT-ELC project at \$20,000 over the four-year grant period. We look forward to working with all the RTT-ELC partners on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kathleen Marioni
Executive Director

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October 7, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Funds

On behalf of Connecticut's State Education Resource Center (SERC), it is my pleasure to express support for, and commitment to, Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) application. These comprehensive and coordinated efforts will increase high-quality care and educational opportunities for Connecticut's young children and their families, especially those children living in poverty, children with disabilities, and children learning English.

SERC is a professional development agency and library primarily funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). SERC provides professional learning opportunities and information dissemination in the latest research and best practices to educators, early childhood and other service providers, families, and community members throughout the state, as well as job-embedded technical assistance and training within schools, programs, and districts.

SERC, formerly known as the Special Education Resource Center, became the State Education Resource Center in 2005 according to a change in state statutes. State statute Sec. 10-4q. "*State Education Resource Center to promote equity and excellence*" requires that:

The State Board of Education shall establish a State Education Resource Center to assist the board in the provision of programs and activities that will promote educational equity and excellence. Such activities, to be provided by the State Education Resource Center..., may include training and continuing education seminars, publication of technical materials, research and evaluation, and other related activities. The center may support programs and activities concerning early childhood education, the federal No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110, and closing the academic achievement gap between socio-economic subgroups, and other related programs.

SERC maximizes the impact of community, state, and federal resources by collaborating with partners including CSDE, CT's Parent Training and Information Center (PTI), Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC), Connecticut's Birth to Three Program, Head Start, the CT Commission on Children, Even Start, the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), the Family Resource Center Alliance, local school districts, and school readiness programs, among others.

SERC hosts a variety of annual conferences and professional learning opportunities covering a wide range of topics of interest to Connecticut's educators, early childhood providers, and the children and families they serve. SERC's 2012-2013 professional development catalogues, one specifically targeted to early childhood education and care, include entire sections devoted to "Early Childhood Education Professional Development Opportunities."

In collaboration with the newly established Office of Early Childhood, SERC will build upon its current services and leverage its statewide partnerships to serve as a mechanism to enhance the quality of CT's early childhood professional development system through competency-based design and assessment of efforts. SERC represents a logical statewide partner because of our mission as established by the Connecticut State Board of Education and the CSDE. Our vision, nimbleness, reach across all districts, and ability to connect RTT-ELC efforts to elementary school and beyond will also facilitate collaboration.

SERC is specifically prepared to assist the RTT-ELC project by:

- Participating in interagency discussions about high-quality professional learning and related topics as convened by the Governor's new Office of Early Childhood.

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www.ctserc.org

Page 2
RTT-ELC Letter of Support
October 7, 2013

- Providing professional development directly to early childhood educators and adjusting professional development curriculum, as needed, to target the learning needs of family-based and kith and kin providers, and coordinating efforts to engage more of these providers in professional learning activities.
- Disseminating information about opportunities associated with the planned Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) to our network of early childhood educators, including family-based and kith and kin educators.
- Disseminating information about new early learning and development standards to early childhood educators, parents, and families.
- Participating in planning and policy discussions regarding the implementation of the RTT-ELC, as appropriate.
- Expanding the Early Childhood Resource Center currently established at SERC, including the development and management of a dedicated website and early childhood collection in the SERC Library.

The Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant represents a valuable and timely opportunity for Connecticut to improve the quality of early learning and development and to close the achievement gap for children with high needs. The Connecticut State Education Resource Center is prepared to support this important effort in any way possible.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Marianne Kirner, Ph.D.
Executive Director



October 7, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy,

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Funds

This letter confirms the commitment of the Connecticut Science Center (CSC) to improve early childhood learning outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative.

With hands-on exhibits, a 3D digital theater, discovery labs, plus a menu of daily educational programs and events for families, the CSC offers endless opportunities for exploration and learning for children and adults. Creating unforgettable experiences with science motivates children and their care-givers to enthusiastically embrace science at school, at home, and in their communities.

The CSC has been working closely with the Education Development Center (EDC) on a three-year project entitled *Cultivating Young Scientists: Expanding Foundations of Science Literacy*. The focus of this research-based project funded by the U.S. Department of Education is aimed at developing a comprehensive professional development program in science for preschool teachers. Under the proposed RTT-ELC initiative, the CSC will continue and expand this commitment which aligns strongly with the initiative's strategic goal of increasing the quality of programs currently serving high needs children.

The CSC will also work to align its materials and displays with RTT-ELC priorities by showcasing resources developed through the project including, information promoting the importance of quality early childhood programs, and information on Early Learning Standards. The CSC will utilize its *KidSpace* exhibit gallery, a popular space focused on early childhood audiences, as a platform to help convey this information.

Connecticut's newly created Office of Early Childhood (OEC) will serve as a strong governing structure to move the RTT-ELC strategies forward and the CSC looks forward to working closely with the OEC.

We estimate the value of our in-kind contributions to the proposed RTT-ELC project at \$60,000 over the grant period. The Connecticut Science Center enthusiastically endorses Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application and looks forward to supporting its successful implementation!

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Matt Fleury
President and CEO, the Connecticut Science Center

Imagine, Discover, Explore

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The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

October 10, 2013

Dear Governor Malloy:

Regarding Connecticut's application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funds

This letter confirms the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education's (CAACE) support for Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) initiative and the ongoing implementation of Public Act No. 11-181, "*An act concerning early childhood education and the establishment of a coordinated system of early care and education and child development.*"

CAACE members are committed to providing quality adult education services that are accessible to all Connecticut adults and lead to mastery of the essential proficiencies needed to function as productive citizens in work, family and community environments. Many of our adult education programs take a lead in coordinating Family Literacy, School Readiness and Even Start programs, educating the parents as well as the children.

Adult education programs can contribute to the success of the RTT-ELC initiative and the implementation of P.A. 11-181 in some of the following ways:

- Research has demonstrated that a mother's education level is one of the greatest predictors of children's school success. Adult education programs will contribute to children's health and success in school by educating their parents to: improve their literacy abilities and/or attain a high school diploma; be better prepared to enter employment or postsecondary education; and be better equipped to move out of poverty and provide a healthier and safer future for their children.
- Programs will promote the training, credentialing, and career opportunities in early education to adult education students.
- In order to increase access to high-quality early care programs, parents enrolled in family literacy projects will be advised about information available through the Quality Rating and Improvement System.

We fully support this effort and look forward to working with you on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Richard Tariff, President
Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing
Education

CAACE P.O. Box 339, North Haven, CT 06473 Telephone/fax 203.691.5016

caace@comcast.net



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www.cahs.org

Casey McGuane, President
James P. Horan, Executive Director
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October 14, 2013

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Room G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Application Support

Dear Dr. Jones-Taylor:

The Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) strongly supports Connecticut's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge application because it promises to advance the process underway to develop Connecticut's early childhood system and ensure high quality early learning and development experiences for many more high needs children.

For decades, CAHS has worked to improve the quality of and access to early learning, care, and development for low-income children, because we know that this will help close the state's large academic achievement and economic gaps. The state plan's goal to increase by 50% high-need children who have high quality early learning and development experiences will be a major step forward, consistent with the efforts of CAHS and other early childhood advocates.

Clearly, this work is a high priority of Governor Dannel Malloy and his Administration. Since he took office in 2011, Governor Malloy has already increased the number of school readiness slots by 1,000 and created the Office of Early Childhood by Executive Order. Creation of the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) ensures that there will be capacity to implement the strategies of the Race to the Top application, including statewide systems building and ensuring high quality for high needs children. The OEC is in an excellent position to ensure the coordination and collaboration of potential stakeholders, including providers, parents, advocates, academics, government agencies, and others.

Decades of studies have shown that early childhood programs can help close academic and achievement gaps for high-needs children, but only if these programs are of high quality. Unfortunately, too many children living in poverty and with other needs either have poor access to early childhood programs, or are in programs of low or unknown quality. The Office of Early Childhood and the Race to the Top application recognize these critical needs and are appropriately focused on improving quality as well as access.

A Century of Strengthening Children, Families, and Communities

Truly, CAHS is excited about all aspects of the state plan: Quality, Access, and System-Building. Connecticut has worked for years to improve quality, but high quality programs remain out of reach for many low-income children and their parents. It is important that the plan seeks to raise the quality of publicly-financed licensed Family Child Care homes and publicly-funded family, friend, and neighbor care providers, and to support these providers through quality improvement centers. We know that a disproportionate share of high-need children are served by these providers, and that these providers have historically had little access to resources to improve the quality of their services.

CAHS is also pleased that the plan includes resources to provide families with information about the importance of quality and the quality ratings of programs, and incentives to choose high quality programs, including higher levels of child care subsidy program reimbursements for quality choices. This will help shrink that the pervasive quality gap between low- and high-need children.

Finally, CAHS has worked with other advocates to build a true system to support quality and access for low-income children, and we believe that the Race to the Top plan will provide the resources to support implementation of such a system. This includes the resource and referral resources for high-needs families through 2-1-1, partnerships with high-needs school districts to sustain gains into third grade, and capturing data and linking it to data systems at other state agencies. As the Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT grantee for Connecticut, CAHS recognizes the critical importance of capturing and applying data, and we applaud the OEC's efforts in this area.

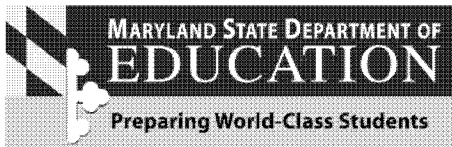
CAHS has worked for decades to improve access to and the quality of early care and education for low-income children and their families. Much progress has been made, and we are on the cusp of seeing measurable goals for our state's high-needs children. The Race to the Top plan will be a great leap forward, and CAHS will strongly support the work of the Office of Early Childhood.

CAHS is pleased to help disseminate information on the OEC's progress and efforts under this grant with our growing 800-member Early Care and Education listserv, as well as our 100-member Provider Caucus. CAHS will work as an advocate, mobilizer, communicator, and convener to ensure the successful implementation of Connecticut's Early Learning Challenge grant, and strongly supports the state's application.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

James P. Horan
Executive Director



Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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October 11, 2013

The Honorable Governor
Daniel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue Hartford,
Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy,

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) enthusiastically supports Connecticut's application of the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant. In late 2011, Maryland has been one of nine recipients of the first solicitation of the Early Learning Challenge Grant. In its application, Maryland and Ohio joined forces to develop a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) as part of a comprehensive assessment system. Currently in its second year of implementation, the KEA is scheduled to be launched in all kindergarten classrooms in Maryland and Ohio in school year 2014-15.

In September 2013, Maryland, as the lead agency under a federally funded Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG), received an award to establish a state consortium to enhance its current KEA and expand its use to five additional members of a KEA State Consortium. Connecticut, as one of the Consortium members, intends to implement the current KEA Version 1.0 in its state under a separate Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Maryland and its partners.

We look forward to this partnership, as we support each other in the implementation of the system beginning in school year 2014-15. Connecticut's knowledge and experience in early childhood education will be an asset to our group as we make progress in closing the gap for our youngest learners.

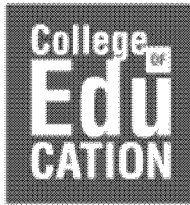
Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Rolf Grafwallner, Ph.D.
Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Early Childhood Development
Maryland State Department of Education

C: Jack Smith
John Ratliff

MarylandPublicSchools.org



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 Seattle, WA 98195
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October 11, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel Malloy
 State Capitol
 210 Capitol Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

I offer my enthusiastic support of Connecticut's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge proposal. The priorities and work outlined demonstrate that the State of Connecticut is committed to providing a continuum of high-quality early learning services and opportunities to young children and their families. The proposal recognizes what research confirms: that the gains children attain in high-quality early learning programs are more likely to be sustained when they experience high-quality elementary classrooms. Connecticut's proposal makes clear that, in order to close persistent achievement gaps, comprehensive approaches that extend across multiple years of children's lives are necessary.

As you may know, the University of Washington has become a leader in innovative efforts to address the P-3 continuum (pre-school through 3rd grade). I have also had the pleasure of working closely for several years with your team at the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood to support their efforts to "sustain improved learning outcomes through the early elementary grades".

Should Connecticut be awarded this grant, I look forward to extending and expanding the collaboration between my work at University of Washington and your state. Specifically, our joint efforts would include a multi-level approach to increase the skills and knowledge of elementary principals, teachers, early childhood directors, and educational coaches in Connecticut as they build sturdy pathways for children from preschool through grade three. I look forward to also working with the University of Connecticut in these endeavors.

You are proposing important and exciting work and I am delighted to contribute to it.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Kristie Kauerz, Ed.D.
 Research Assistant Professor, P-3 Policy and Leadership

SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR



RETTA WARD, CABINET SECRETARY

10/11/13

Linda Goodman, Deputy Director
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Ave. Room G29
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Linda:

This letter is being provided in support of Connecticut's application for the third round Race To the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant.

The state of New Mexico was awarded a second round RTT-ELC grant and is fully integrating the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C Early Intervention program into our state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS). Following our discussions with Connecticut we are interested in partnering to develop TQRIS quality measurement tools and validate such tools so that they may be used by other RTT-ELC and non RTT-ELC states.

One example of this collaboration is that New Mexico will be developing an observation tool that can be used to measure quality early intervention practices. This will include: determining the early intervention practices to be included; establishing a measurement scale; developing a training module on the tool; and validating the tool.

We look forward to collaborating with Connecticut in this work should they be awarded a RTT-ELC grant.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Andy Gomm
NM IDEA Part C Early Intervention Director
Family Infant Toddler Program

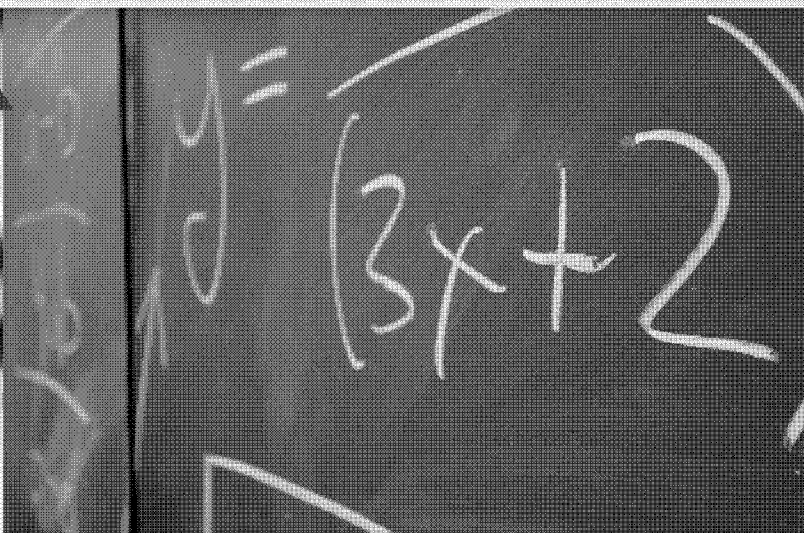
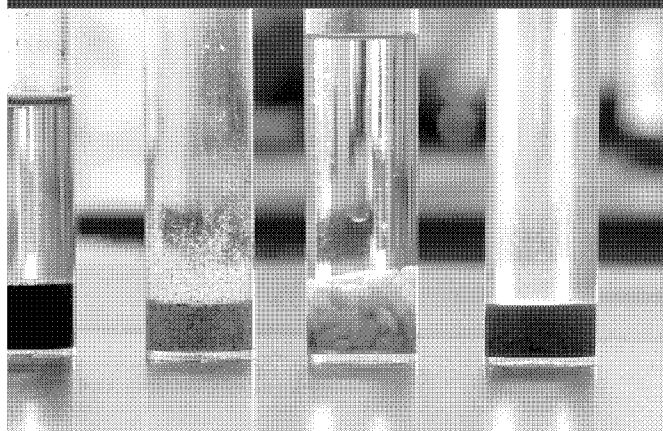


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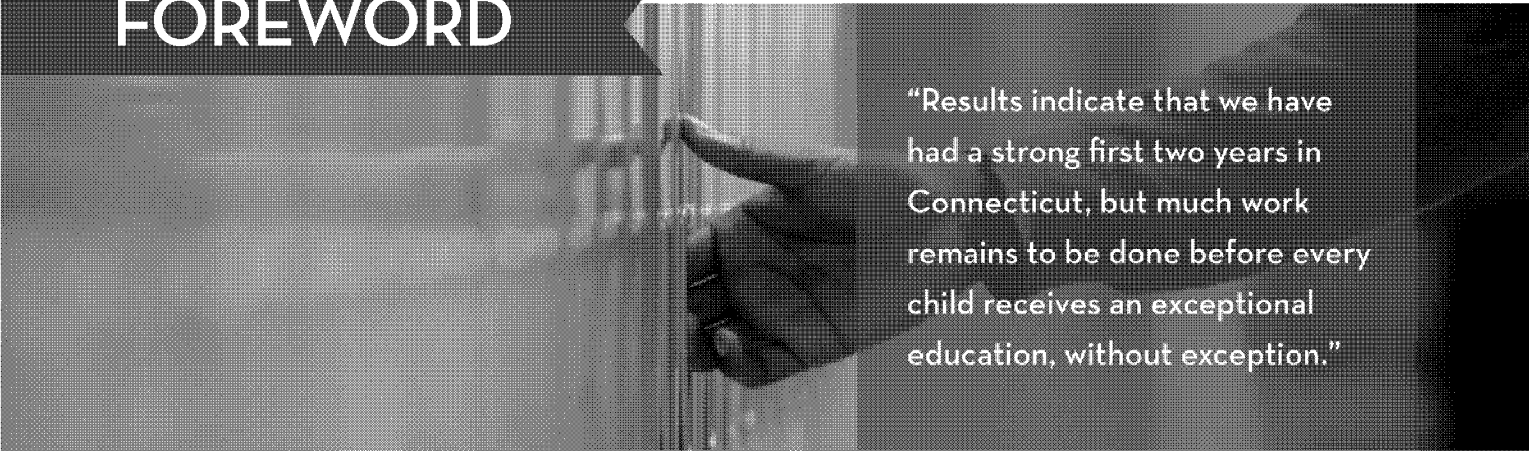
2013 POLICY PROGRESS REPORT

A rubric for grading Connecticut's progress in implementing the recommendations of the
Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement

*A Report by The Connecticut Council
for Education Reform (CCER)*



FOREWORD



“Results indicate that we have had a strong first two years in Connecticut, but much work remains to be done before every child receives an exceptional education, without exception.”

DEAR READER:

In 2012, Connecticut passed landmark education legislation aimed at closing Connecticut’s widest-in-the-nation achievement gap. We applaud Governor Dannel Malloy and the legislature for taking this bold, initial step to improve our public education system.

However, creating meaningful and lasting change requires transforming these policies into practice. Over the past year, the Connecticut State Department of Education and public school districts have been working hard to begin implementing these policies. We have made progress, but we still have a long way to go. Creating lasting, systemic changes is a difficult task, and it will take years of persistence to fully repair our struggling schools and close the achievement gap.

Because the road to reforming education is long—it may take up to 10 years—the key to success is continuous, measurable improvement. As stakeholders, we must hold ourselves collectively accountable until every Connecticut child receives an outstanding education. That’s why the Connecticut Council for Education Reform’s (CCER) *2013 Policy Progress Report* introduces a new rubric that will allow us to quantitatively chart our state’s progress in passing and implementing these critical reforms. Results indicate that we have had a strong first two years in Connecticut—over 30 percent¹ of the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement’s (CCEA) recommendations² have been fully implemented. However, much work remains to be done before every child will receive an exceptional education, without exception.

CCER sees itself as a long-term partner for education leaders dedicated to reforming education in our state. We are tremendously grateful to the many stakeholders who have worked tirelessly to endorse and support the progress that has been made so far, and to the dedicated educators and leaders who work in our public education system. If we work together and remain focused on our goal, we can make sure that every child is successfully prepared for the 21st century and beyond.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Steve Simmons

Chair, Connecticut Council for Education Reform

¹. This should not be construed as a low grade. In our view, full implementation of over 30 percent of the CCEA’s recommendations is a good first year score.

². Visit www.ctedreform.org to see the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement’s original report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Connecticut's landmark education reform bill, P.A. 12-116, *An Act Concerning Education Reform*, included significant elements of the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement's (CCEA) recommendations. These recommendations constitute a 10-year plan for improving Connecticut's schools.

With this Policy Report, CCER introduces a new rubric based on the CCEA's recommendations. It will track our state's progress in effecting the changes needed to close Connecticut's widest-in-the-nation achievement gap.

While tremendous progress has been made, still more needs to be done in six critical areas:

1 Demand Accountability

- CT has strong state-level leaders.
- But they need high-quality data to drive informed decision-making.

2 High Expectations

- By embracing the Common Core State Standards, CT will prepare students to be college- and career-ready.
- CT is beginning to take actions to increase parental involvement in our lowest-performing schools.
- Much more needs to be done to expand quality preschool programs and to identify and remediate students who are behind.

3 Foster Leadership

- CT now requires school principals to be evaluated for effectiveness, and it has recently created a program to develop more urban school leaders.
- We must do more to expand the talent pipeline through certification reciprocity and Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) programs.
- We must also authorize the Commissioner of Education to waive certification requirements for experienced leaders.

4 Excellent Teaching

- CT has done an impressive job of reforming teacher tenure by tying it to effectiveness.
- CT will ensure that each classroom has an effective teacher with professional support programs.
- Much more needs to be done to increase the number of effective teachers—from the preparation of teachers to the adoption of programs to attract and retain high quality teachers in the most needy communities.

5 Invest Intelligently

- CT does not do a good job of explaining how it spends its significant education dollars.

6 Turn Around Schools

- CT has created a framework to transform low-performing schools and school districts, but its success depends upon sustained annual expansion.



Note: A recurring theme throughout this report is the finding that CT needs to build a high-quality, longitudinal data system. This critical tool is needed to track education reform across all six of our recommendation areas.

This report demonstrates progress in reforming Connecticut schools. It has only been a year since Connecticut passed landmark education reform legislation, and in that short period, over 30 percent of the CCEA's recommendations have been fully implemented. We believe this is a good score for the first year, and it should not be construed as a low score. However, Connecticut must continue to move forward so that all of the state's students can get an exceptional education, without exception.



Strengthen state leadership and drive accountability for educational change.

DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY

Total Points

COMPLETE

4

INCOMPLETE

4

1(a)

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

Connecticut receives **4 out of 4 points** for leadership because its Governor has installed a strong, reform-oriented team, and has taken steps to reorganize state-level leadership in education.

In the 2012 Legislative Session, Governor Dannel P. Malloy made education reform a priority for his administration and proposed a landmark education reform bill. He also appointed eight, and reappointed three, members to the State Board of Education (CSBE) between 2011 and 2013.² On June 24, 2013, the Governor signed Executive Order #35, which created a consolidated Early Childhood Office.³

Additionally, the Commissioner and CSBE have advanced a reorganization of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to include a School Turnaround Office and a School Talent Office, both of which report to the Commissioner.⁴ The State created four new leadership positions—Chief Academic Officer, Chief Talent Officer, Chief Turnaround Officer, and Chief Performance Officer—that report directly to the Commissioner. However, the CSDE needs the authority to offer competitive compensation and hire consultants as needed.

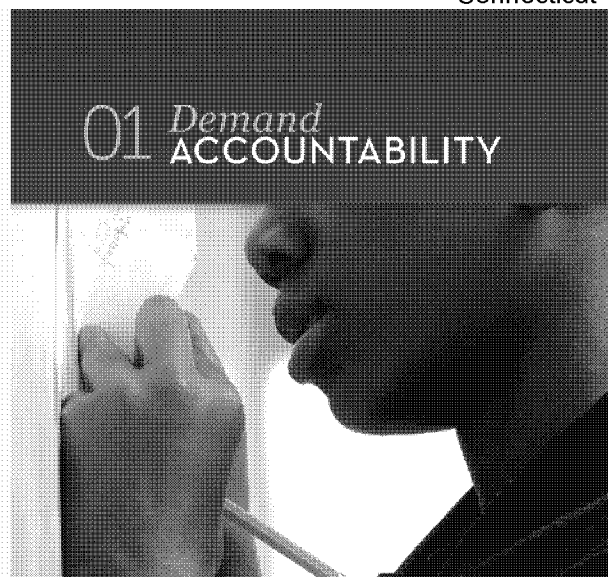
**4 out of 4 points**

1(b)

PROVIDING THE DATA TO INFORM AND DRIVE DECISIONS

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4 points** for significant improvement of data collection, analysis, and public reporting because it has not yet implemented a comprehensive system of tracking student progress.

In December of 2005, the CSDE received a \$1.5 million grant to aid in the further development of a statewide, longitudinal data system that would be based upon State Assigned Student



Identifiers.⁵ A second grant from the U.S. Department of Education Institute for Education Sciences was awarded in 2009 to develop a system that would connect data on students and teachers in order to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs.⁶ Although the CSDE did launch a Connecticut Education Data and Research site⁷ in 2009, this site only compiles enrollment data and other publicly available data; it does not use any State Assigned Student Identifiers to track student progress or inform programming and policy decisions.⁸

Connecticut still needs a comprehensive, longitudinal student data system that is linked to the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and teacher preparation programs.

**0 out of 4 points**

Demand Accountability Rubric

1(a)
4 points available

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

- ▶ The Governor endorses an education reform agenda.
- ▶ The Governor appoints at least half of the members of the State Board of Education (CSBE).
- ▶ The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is reorganized and staffed with specific offices that oversee early childhood education, school turnaround, and teacher and school leadership development.
- ▶ The new CSDE offices report hierarchically to the Commissioner and the Governor.

1(b)
4 points available

PROVIDING THE DATA TO INFORM AND DRIVE DECISIONS

- ▶ Connecticut develops a longitudinal data system for tracking student progress from Pre-K to post-secondary school.
- ▶ CT links the longitudinal student data system to teacher and principal effectiveness.
- ▶ CT links the longitudinal data systems to the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs.
- ▶ CT makes information in the longitudinal data system publicly available.

▶ = COMPLETE ▶ = INCOMPLETE

We believe every child deserves an exceptional education every year. As the business and civic voice for comprehensive reform in public education, we advocate for policies that work at the state level, and collaborate with state, district, and school leaders to support implementation at the local level.



Raise expectations and provide supports so all students can meet them.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Total Points

COMPLETE

5

INCOMPLETE

18



2(a)

EXPAND HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN TO ENSURE SCHOOL READINESS

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4 points** for using early childhood experiences to ensure school readiness. Legislation passed in 2012 does require the development of a quality rating and improvement system for early childhood education programs.⁹ Governor Malloy has also called for a “unified set of reporting requirements” in order to provide both “quality assessments and longitudinal analysis.”¹⁰ However, a quality rating and improvement system for early childhood programs has yet to be implemented.

Furthermore, Connecticut still needs a system that will let parents and the public know which early childhood programs do a good job of preparing kids for kindergarten. Additionally, Connecticut has an unmet need of access to preschool programming and all-day kindergarten for all low-income children. Notably, the state did fund 1,000 slots for school readiness programs in 2013, but the state needs 6,500 slots to ensure that every low-income child attends preschool.^{11 12}



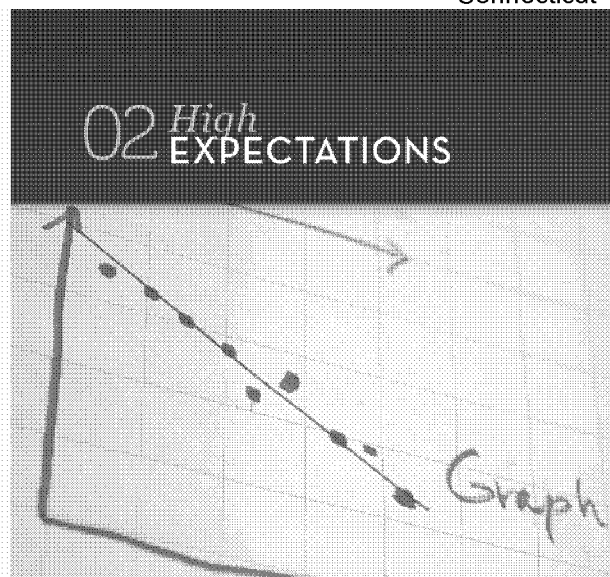
0 out of 4 points

2(b)

MAXIMIZE THE POWER OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Connecticut receives **1 out of 3 points** for maximizing the power of parental involvement. Connecticut’s teacher evaluation and support system requires school districts to include parental feedback in teacher evaluations. This innovative approach creates an easily accessible method for all parents to give their schools feedback about their children’s teachers.¹³

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has also piloted Parent Academies in two Alliance Districts that help to



enhance the capacity of parents to support learning at home and in school.¹⁴ Connecticut also supports discreet programs aimed at expanding parental involvement. For instance, according to the Connecticut Commission on Children, the Parent Trust Fund supports parent leadership training in several towns.¹⁵

However, the CSDE must expand these strategies to deploy them in all of the lowest-performing 5% of school districts and establish a competitive grant for low-achieving school districts to develop innovative strategies for parental involvement.



1 out of 3 points

2(c)

ALIGN STATEWIDE CURRICULA TO HIGH STANDARDS

Connecticut receives **3 out of 4 points** for its efforts to set high curricular standards statewide. In December of 2012, the CSDE presented its revised plan for implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE).¹⁶ This plan, to be completed by the 2014-2015 school year, calls for providing model curricula and requiring all districts to align their curricula with the CCSS.¹⁷ To that end, the CSDE has made some resources available online, including: sample lesson plans to support language arts, pacing guides, and tools to evaluate the quality of CCSS lessons in

literacy and math.¹⁸

The CSDE is also monitoring and supporting implementation of the CCSS in the state's 30 lowest-performing districts, which are eligible for Alliance District grants. In this coming year's application for Alliance District funds, the CSDE has established three priority areas, the first of which is transitioning to the new CCSS and accompanying assessments.¹⁹ Public Act 13-184 provided \$14.6 million over the FY 2013-15 biennial for districts to implement CCSS.²⁰

However, the CSBE needs to use its authority to audit curricular materials and practices in the lowest-performing schools in order to properly ensure that CCSS are implemented correctly in these schools.



3 out of 4 points

2(d)

IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT LOW-ACHIEVING STUDENTS EARLY IN THEIR ACADEMIC CAREERS

Connecticut receives **1 out of 4 points** for requiring academic remediation for students who are academically behind.

In the 2012 Legislative Session, Connecticut enacted legislation requiring the CSDE to develop a comprehensive reading plan to produce effective reading instruction for students in grades K-3.²¹ However, Public Act 13-245 delayed the creation of the plan until FY 2014-15.²² Connecticut needs to take more steps to intervene early and provide additional learning opportunities when children are behind.



1 out of 4 points

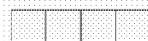
2(e)

MEASURE STUDENT PROGRESS FREQUENTLY

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4 points** for frequently measuring student progress. To date, Connecticut has not provided multiple opportunities for assessment. However,

Connecticut is in the process of adopting Smarter Balanced assessments to align grades and subjects with the Common Core State Standards. These new assessments, which will be fully implemented in 2014-2015, will also provide formative and cumulative data assessment information. However, the CSBE has not yet acted on its authority to establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for the lowest-performing 5% of schools, nor have schools been required to administer benchmark assessments throughout the year.

Connecticut should strive to offer formative assessments at least three times per year and to make assessment scores available within 45 days. These changes will allow educators to make instructional decisions throughout the year based upon student progress.



0 out of 4 points

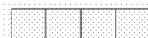
2(f)

SET HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4 points** for setting high expectations for what students should know and be able to do.

Connecticut has yet to establish exit exams that ensure all students have mastered the skills and content necessary for success before graduating from high school. Although Connecticut has passed legislation that (1) requires students to pass a series of tests in order to graduate from high school, and (2) establishes that local boards of education must provide pre-assessment early interventions and supports, the implementation of this legislation has been repeatedly delayed.

Connecticut must establish proficiency standards for subject-matter knowledge and require exit exams at the end of high school to make sure all graduating student possess this knowledge. Additionally, Connecticut needs to provide early interventions and re-take opportunities for students who do not pass the high school assessment.



0 out of 4 points

High Expectations Rubric

2(a)
4 points available

EXPAND HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL AND FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN TO ENSURE SCHOOL READINESS

- ▶ The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) establishes a quality rating system for programs providing early childcare and early education.
- ▶ The CSDE publicly reports on data in the quality rating system.
- ▶ All-day kindergarten is required for all students in districts that have the lowest-performing 5% of elementary schools.
- ▶ Connecticut provides sufficient funding for all low-income three- and four-year olds to attend high-quality preschool programs.

2(b)
3 points available

MAXIMIZE THE POWER OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- ▶ The CSDE develops effective strategies for involving parents in the education of their children.
- ▶ The CSDE deploys these strategies in the lowest-performing 5% of districts.
- ▶ The CSDE establishes a competitive grant program, possibly with philanthropic funds, to promote these programs.

2(c)
4 points available

ALIGN STATEWIDE CURRICULA TO HIGH STANDARDS

- ▶ The CSDE makes available online model curricula that are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
- ▶ The CSDE implements a coordinated statewide plan for training and supporting implementation of the CCSS.
- ▶ The Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) acts on its authority to audit curricular materials in the lowest-performing schools.
- ▶ CT monitors and supports the lowest-performing districts to ensure appropriate implementation of the CCSS.

2(d)
4 points available

IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT LOW-ACHIEVING STUDENTS EARLY IN THEIR ACADEMIC CAREERS

- ▶ CT enacts legislation requiring districts and schools to provide academic interventions—including opportunities such as summer school, customized learning experiences, extended day programs, in-school tutoring, or Saturday academies.
- ▶ CT enacts legislation requiring students in grades 1-2 to attend such programming if assessment scores indicate that they are far behind in reading or math.
- ▶ CT enacts legislation requiring students in grades 3-5 to attend such programming if they fall below the designated proficiency standard on statewide assessments.
- ▶ CT enacts legislation requiring students in grades 6-11 to attend such programming if they have any two of the following risk factors: falling below the designated proficiency standard on statewide assessments, excessive absences, or course failure.

2(e)
4 points available

MEASURE STUDENT PROGRESS FREQUENTLY

- ▶ CT makes statewide assessment scores available to school districts and teachers within 45 days of the assessment date so that results can be used to make instructional decisions during the school year.
- ▶ The CSBE acts on its authority to establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for the lowest-performing 5% of schools.
- ▶ The CSBE acts on its authority to establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for all schools.
- ▶ All schools are required to administer assessments three times a year, based upon Connecticut Benchmark Assessment Systems (CBAS) that the CSDE builds out to align all grades and subjects with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

2(f)
4 points available

SET HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO

- ▶ Connecticut establishes a proficiency standard for subject-matter knowledge.
- ▶ In accordance with subject-matter proficiency standards, students are required to pass standardized tests in order to graduate from high school.
- ▶ The CSBE provides resources to support pre-assessment early intervention.
- ▶ The CSBE provides retake opportunities for students who do not achieve a passing score on the high school assessment tests.

▶ = COMPLETE ▶ = INCOMPLETE



Attract, develop, and empower the most effective leaders for our schools.

FOSTER LEADERSHIP

Total Points

COMPLETE

5

INCOMPLETE

17



3(a)

BROADEN THE POOL OF CT SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERS

Connecticut receives **1 out of 4 points** for broadening the pool of Connecticut school and district leaders. In 2013, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), in collaboration with partner organizations, established LEAD Connecticut. LEAD Connecticut's mission is to develop school- and district-level leaders, with a specific focus on developing leaders for Connecticut's 30 lowest-performing school districts.²³

However, Connecticut still needs to change certification requirements to encourage talented school and district leaders from out-of-state to work in Connecticut. In 2012, new legislation provided the Commissioner of Education with the authority to waive certification requirements for experienced out-of-state superintendents. However, this legislation makes the waiver merely probationary, and it is limited by the caveat that such leaders must still complete a leadership course during a probationary period.²⁴ The Commissioner needs the authority—without any caveats—to waive certification requirements for all experienced out-of-state school and district leaders.

Additionally, Connecticut also must pass legislation to open Alternative Routes to Certification (ARC) programs for individuals with varied professional backgrounds who have appropriate instructional leadership experience.



1 out of 4 points

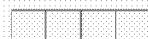
3(b)

REFORM THE PROCESS OF ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION, CERTIFICATION, AND SUPPORT

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4 points** for reforming the process of administrator preparation, certification, and support.



To improve these processes, administrator preparation programs must offer a specialized track for improving urban/turnaround schools and districts; require training in performing meaningful evaluations; and prominently feature clinical practice in the pursuit of mastering defined teaching competencies. Additionally, Connecticut must require graduates of administrator preparation programs to participate in a residency year—complete with mentorship and professional development—before beginning full-time employment as administrators.



0 out of 4 points

3(c)

EXTENSIVELY TRAIN EXISTING PRINCIPALS IN NEW EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Connecticut receives **2 out of 4 points** for providing extensive training and opportunities for practice to principals in the new evaluation and support system.

Legislation passed in 2012 requires all evaluators to be trained in this system,²⁵ and Public Act 13-184 also provides \$20 million for the FY 2013-15 biennium to fund this training for teachers and leaders.²⁶ As of the summer of 2013, the CSDE has developed and is executing a plan to deliver training on the new evaluation and support system to all principals. However, in order

for the new evaluation and support systems to work effectively statewide, it will also be critical to train leaders to use student and teacher data systems that work across the state.



2 out of 4 points

3(d)

HOLD SCHOOL LEADERS ACCOUNTABLE

Connecticut receives **1 out of 4 points** for linking principal evaluations to student growth. In June 2012, the State Board of Education approved a framework for teacher and principal evaluations, developed by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), which (along with other performance measures) ties principal evaluation to indicators of student growth.²⁷

Nonetheless, Connecticut still needs to hold leaders accountable by requiring them to establish annual goals for themselves that are directly linked to student achievement, in addition to making student growth a feature of evaluations. Principal compensation should be based upon each principal meeting these annual goals. Additionally, Connecticut should offer incentives for principals who are evaluated as being highly effective to transfer to low-performing schools.



1 out of 4 points

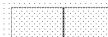
3(e)

REMOVE TENURE AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS FROM PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL ROLES

Connecticut receives **0 out of 2 points** for removing tenure or collective bargaining from administrator and management positions.

Although Connecticut has modified tenure laws as they apply to teachers,²⁸ the State still needs to pass legislation so that principals and assistant principals no longer have collective

bargaining rights or are treated as teachers for the purpose of tenure.



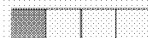
0 out of 2 points

3(f)

LET DISTRICT LEADERS RUN THE SYSTEM

Connecticut receives **1 out of 4 points** for letting district leaders run the system. Current legislation gives superintendents managerial authority over the school system and its supervision.²⁹ However, superintendents must also be required to set annual goals—to be approved by the boards of education—for student performance.

Furthermore, CT still needs to require both state and local boards of education to undergo training on the role of the board and on effective governance policies. Leadership will only be able to effectively run the public school system when the roles of boards and superintendents are properly balanced and delineated, and superintendents are held accountable for student performance.



1 out of 4 points

Foster Leadership Rubric

3(a)
4 points available

BROADEN THE POOL OF CONNECTICUT SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERS

- ▶ The Commissioner of Education is authorized to waive certification requirements for experienced out-of-state school and district leaders.
- ▶ Connecticut establishes legislation granting automatic reciprocity to school and district leaders from other states.
- ▶ Further legislation also opens Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) programs for individuals with varied professional backgrounds who have appropriate instructional leadership experience.
- ▶ CT creates programs specifically designed to develop urban school leaders.

3(b)
4 points available

REFORM THE PROCESS OF ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION, CERTIFICATION, AND SUPPORT

- ▶ Graduates of administrator preparation programs are provided with a residency year—complete with mentorship and professional development—before beginning full-time employment as administrators.
- ▶ Administrator preparation programs offer a specialized track for improving urban/turnaround schools and districts.
- ▶ Administrator preparation programs are required to include training in meaningful evaluations.
- ▶ Administrator preparation programs prominently feature clinical practice in the pursuit of mastering defined teaching competencies.

3(c)
4 points available

EXTENSIVELY TRAIN EXISTING PRINCIPALS IN NEW EVALUATION SYSTEMS

- ▶ School principals are trained in the use of new student and teacher data systems.
- ▶ Training in the new student and teacher data systems follows a statewide schedule.
- ▶ School principals are trained in the use of the new evaluation system.
- ▶ Training in the new evaluation system follows a statewide schedule.

3(d)
4 points available

HOLD SCHOOL LEADERS ACCOUNTABLE

- ▶ Principals are required to develop annual goals regarding student achievement and other indicators.
- ▶ Principal evaluations are tied to growth in student achievement.
- ▶ Principal compensation is based upon each principal meeting annual goals.
- ▶ CT offers incentives for principals evaluated as being highly effective to transfer to low-performing districts and/or schools.

3(e)
2 points available

REMOVE TENURE AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS FROM PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL ROLES

- ▶ Legislation modifies tenure so that it does not apply to principals or assistant principals.⁶²
- ▶ Legislation is passed so that collective bargaining is no longer permitted for principals or assistant principals.

3(f)
4 points available

LET DISTRICT LEADERS RUN THE SYSTEM

- ▶ Members of the State Board of Education are required to undergo training on the role of the board and effective governance policies.
- ▶ All local boards of education are required to undergo training on the role of the board and effective governance policies.
- ▶ Superintendents are required to publicly set goals on student performance that will be approved by the boards of education.
- ▶ Superintendents are given the authority over operations of the school district including hiring and evaluation of personnel.

▶ = COMPLETE ▶ = INCOMPLETE



Prepare, support, and retain excellent teachers for all—but especially low-income—students.

EXCELLENT TEACHING

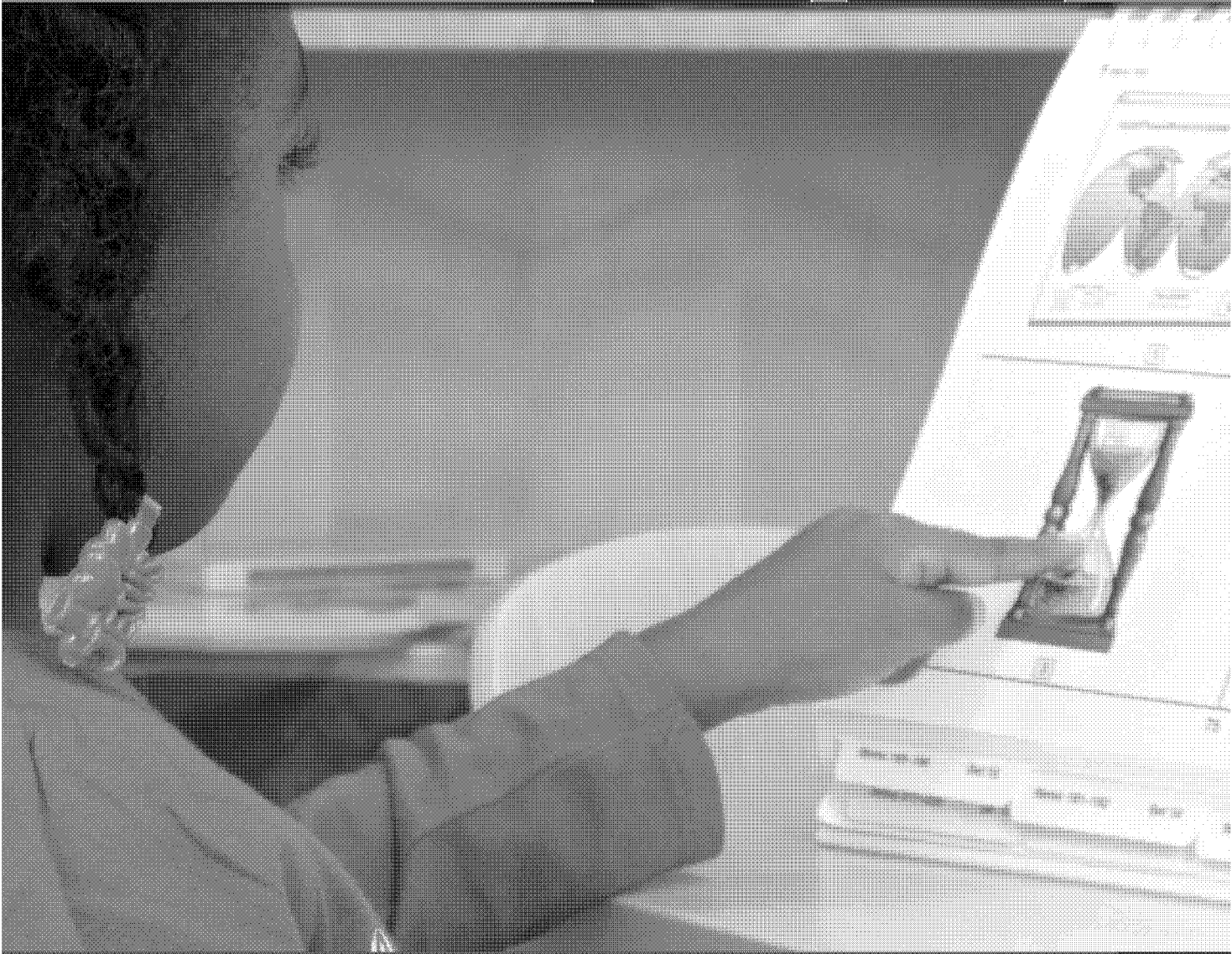
Total Points

COMPLETE

6

INCOMPLETE

13



4(a)

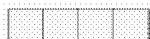
IMPROVE THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4 points** for restructuring teacher preparation programs so that candidates must demonstrate content knowledge and instructional skills in order to earn teaching degrees.

Convened in 2012, The Educator Preparation Advisory Council (EPAC) has been tasked with creating a framework for reforming educator preparation programs.³⁰ However, to date, EPAC has produced only guiding principles for further research. Connecticut still needs to develop clear coursework guidelines and require elementary and special education teachers to pass Foundations of Math assessments, in addition to Foundations of Reading assessments.

Connecticut also needs to set higher expectations for field experiences in teacher preparation programs. Although legislation passed in 2012 requires candidates in teacher preparation programs to have four semesters of in-classroom experiences,³¹ we still need to specifically require exposure to experiences in high-poverty schools.

Finally, Connecticut must begin tracking the effectiveness of teachers produced by preparation programs, and use this information to revoke approval of preparation programs that do not produce effective teachers. It is also imperative that Connecticut increase the growth of Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) programs by allowing effectiveness measures to be substituted for the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education standards.



0 out of 4 points

04 *Excellent*
TEACHING



4(b)

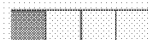
WEIGHT TEACHER EVALUATION TOWARDS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Connecticut receives **1 out of 4 points** for tying teacher evaluation and support to student achievement. Legislation passed in 2012 requires all districts to implement a teacher evaluation system in accordance with a framework developed by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC).³² The PEAC framework establishes that 45% of a teacher's overall evaluation shall be based upon indicators of student growth.³³

However, the new teacher evaluation and support system will not be tied to compensation and placement.

According to a recent memorandum from Commissioner Pryor, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is planning to collect data on student records and testing for a "Teacher-Course-Student Collection".³⁴ But as of the summer of 2013, we still need to establish and implement a comprehensive, working data system that links student, teacher, course, and administrative data.

It is also important for Connecticut to pass legislation requiring layoff decisions to be based upon factors other than seniority, such as effectiveness and school needs.



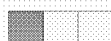
1 out of 4 points

4(c)

KEEP EFFECTIVE TEACHERS TEACHING

Connecticut receives **1 out of 3 points** for supporting practices to develop and retain effective teachers. Legislation passed in 2012 established that professional development must emphasize improved practice in individual and small group coaching sessions, which are to be informed, in part, by teacher evaluation results and findings.³⁵

However, Connecticut still needs to improve teacher retention by aligning teacher compensation with a career ladder framework and providing bonuses based on effectiveness.

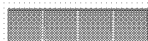
**1 out of 3 points**

4(d)

RELATE TEACHER TENURE TO EFFECTIVENESS

Connecticut receives **4 out of 4 points** for making teacher effectiveness the central issue in tenure decisions and for ceasing to allow tenure to serve as a barrier to the removal of ineffective teachers.

Legislation passed in 2012 established that teacher tenure decisions must be based, in part, on evaluation results. This means that tenure is now linked to measures of effectiveness. Furthermore, the law established that teachers rated as “ineffective” will be given a year for individualized professional development, and, upon failure to improve, will be terminated. Under this legislation, teachers who already have tenured status may also be removed for ineffectiveness.³⁶

**4 out of 4 points**

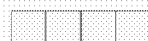
4(e)

GET HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS TO THE LOWEST-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4 points** for attracting and retaining highly effective teachers in the lowest-performing districts and schools.

In the 2013 Legislative Session, Governor Malloy introduced a bill that would have created a pilot program to attract and retain highly effective teachers, including by allowing philanthropic funding to be earmarked for this purpose.³⁷ However, the Education Committee eliminated these provisions in their version of the bill, and instead, created a limited, 2-year study.³⁸ Therefore, Connecticut still needs to permit philanthropic organizations to earmark financial incentives to attract highly effective teachers in the lowest-performing districts, and to fund additional supports and mentoring for teachers in those districts.

It is also important for the State to begin to publicly report anonymous data on the distribution of teachers by effectiveness. Furthermore, we still need to require or provide incentives for teachers to give early notice of plans to leave their school districts. These policies will allow us to track the need for effective teachers statewide, and move highly effective teachers to the districts with greatest need.

**0 out of 4 points**

Excellent Teaching Rubric

4(a)
4 points available

IMPROVE THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

- ▶ The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) provides clear coursework guidelines for teacher preparation programs to produce effective teachers—including requiring all elementary and special education teachers to pass the Foundations of Reading and Math assessments.
- ▶ The CSDE requires teacher candidates to have more in-classroom field experiences, including at least one field experience in a high-poverty school with an effective teacher.
- ▶ The CSDE requires all teacher preparation programs to publicly report data on their students and graduates, and revokes approval of teacher preparation programs that do not produce enough effective teachers.
- ▶ The Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) increases the growth of Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) programs by allowing effectiveness measures to be substituted for the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

4(b)
4 points available

WEIGHT TEACHER EVALUATION TOWARDS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- ▶ Districts are required to use a teacher evaluation system that gives significant weight to student growth.
- ▶ The evaluation system is tied to compensation and placement, and protects against arbitrary dismissals.
- ▶ Connecticut institutes a K-12 data system that links student, teacher, course, and administrative data.
- ▶ Legislation requires variables besides seniority to be used in teacher layoff decisions.

4(c)
3 points available

KEEP EFFECTIVE TEACHERS TEACHING

- ▶ Legislation restructures teacher compensation by requiring it to be aligned with a tiered career ladder framework.
- ▶ Legislation restructures teacher compensation by requiring it to be aligned with performance bonuses.
- ▶ Connecticut establishes a statewide system linking professional development to effectiveness so that teachers receive clear feedback about how to improve their instructional practices.

4(d)
4 points available

RELATE TEACHER TENURE TO EFFECTIVENESS

- ▶ School districts are required to use teacher evaluations as the basis for imposing additional training requirements and termination of ineffective teachers.
- ▶ School districts are required to give ineffective teachers a specific period of time for improvement.
- ▶ The Teacher Tenure Act is modified so that tenure ceases to be a barrier to the timely removal of persistently ineffective teachers.
- ▶ The Teacher Tenure Act is modified so that tenure is only granted to teachers who have demonstrated teaching effectiveness.

4(e)
4 points available

GET HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS TO THE MOST CHALLENGED SCHOOLS

- ▶ Legislation permits philanthropic assistance to be earmarked for financial incentives to attract and retain highly effective teachers in the lowest-performing districts.
- ▶ Legislation permits philanthropic assistance to be earmarked to fund additional support and mentoring for teachers in these districts.
- ▶ Legislation requires teachers to give notice of plans to leave their school districts by March.
- ▶ Legislation requires the state to publicly report anonymous data on the distribution of teachers by effectiveness.

▶ = COMPLETE ▶ = INCOMPLETE



Establish an effective, transparent, and equitable way of funding public education.

INVEST INTELLIGENTLY

Total Points

COMPLETE

2

INCOMPLETE

12



5(a)

REDEPLOY EDUCATION COST SHARING GRANTS

Connecticut receives **0 out of 4** points for developing a new Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula that will effectively and transparently redeploy education funds.

New ECS language enacted in 2013 has a goal of increasing ECS funding by about \$700 million.³⁹ However, given the State's budget environment, this can only be increased incrementally over an extended period of time.⁴⁰ This legislation provides for a faster phase in of this new formula for the lowest-performing school districts, but a slow rate of phase in for the remaining districts.⁴¹ It is important for a new ECS formula to be properly phased in over 3-5 years.

Connecticut does apply levels of weight for low-income students in the new funding formula. But it is important for us also to create consistently applied levels of weight for different student needs, such as for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

Finally, it is important for CT to develop a funding formula that has a long-term goal of allowing "money to follow the child".



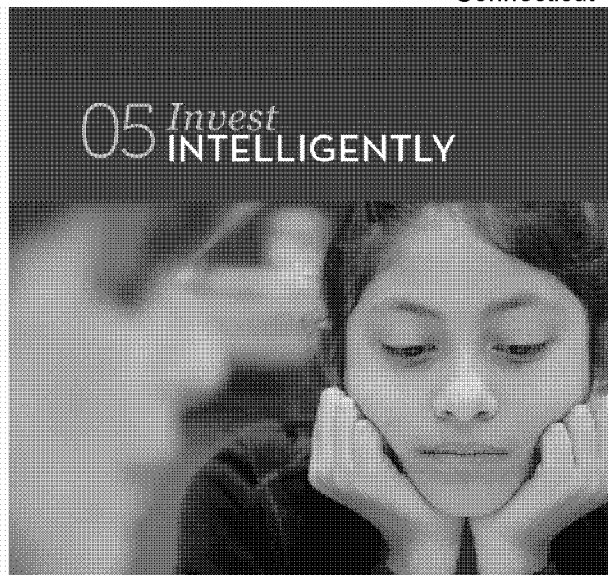
0 out of 4 points

5(b)

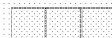
REALLOCATE CATEGORICAL FUNDS

Connecticut receives **0 out of 3** points for rethinking the use of categorical funds. In 2013, Governor Malloy proposed legislation that would have streamlined categorical grants and given the Commissioner of Education more flexibility to deploy those funds for education reform programs.⁴² However, the legislature did not enact the proposed legislation, and instead, restored the categorical grants back to their original status.⁴³

It is critical for Connecticut to conduct a comprehensive



study on the efficacy of programming funded by categorical grants. We need to track the use of these grants, and implement a plan for reallocating those that are ineffectively used, in order to target efforts aimed at improving achievement for low-income students.



0 out of 3 points

5(c)

ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE COMMON CHART OF ACCOUNTS

Connecticut receives **1 out of 3** points for revising the process of tracking education expenditures to improve transparency and public accountability.

New legislation passed in 2012 requires a statewide Uniform Chart of Accounts (UCA) to track comparable data on per pupil expenditures at the school-, district-, and state-levels.⁴⁴ The state has also retained a vendor to develop the UCA. However, the UCA has not yet been implemented.

Connecticut also needs to incorporate qualitative data—such as student achievement data, student/teacher ratios, and teacher and leader qualifications and effectiveness—into an easy-to-navigate dashboard. This would allow comparisons and analysis between comparable schools and districts. Furthermore,

we must still establish a plan to review the effectiveness of programs funded.



1 out of 3 points

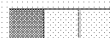
5(d)

FIND COST EFFICIENCIES SUCH AS CONSOLIDATION AND SHARED SERVICES

Connecticut receives **1 out of 3 points** for encouraging school districts to consolidate various operations and/or share services. Legislation passed in 2012 commissioned a study on small district inefficiencies.⁴⁵ In addition, the Connecticut General Assembly will continue its work on regional collaboration and creating additional efficiencies this fall,⁴⁶ and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is finalizing a study of how small districts could benefit from consolidation. The 2013-2015 biennial budget allocates \$190,000 for technical assistance to small districts to further regionalization efforts.⁴⁷ Non-Alliance Districts may reduce their budget appropriation for education by no more than half a percent if the district realizes new and documentable savings through increased intra-district

efficiencies.⁴⁸

However, it is still important for the CSDE to oversee a pilot program on shared service models, and to offer training to school districts on the possible benefits of consolidation.



1 out of 3 points

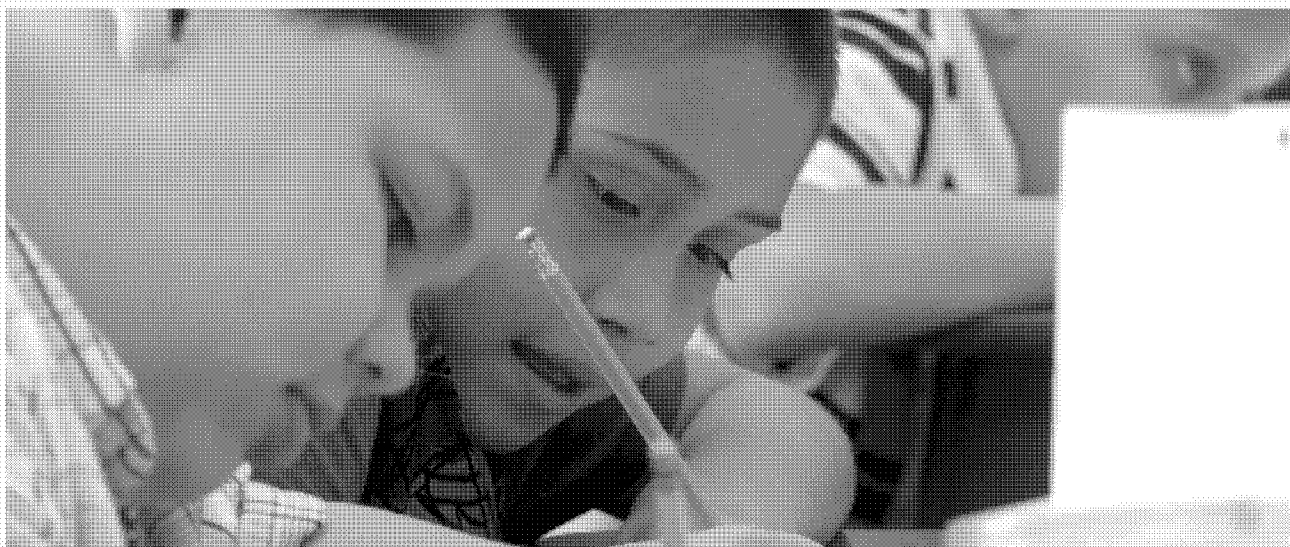
5(e)

APPLY FOR MORE FEDERAL AND PRIVATE GRANTS

Connecticut receives **0 out of 1 available point** because we have not hired an individual with a record of grant-writing success to oversee the State's application for federal and private grants.



0 out of 1 point



Invest Intelligently Rubric

5(a)
4 points available

REDEPLOY EDUCATION COST SHARING GRANTS

- ▶ Connecticut phases in a new Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula to be fully implemented over 3-5 years.
- ▶ The new ECS formula applies consistent levels of weight for different student needs.
- ▶ The new ECS formula applies to all public schools, including charters and magnets.
- ▶ The new ECS formula has a long-term goal of having "money follow the child".

5(b)
3 points available

REALLOCATE CATEGORICAL FUNDS

- ▶ The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducts a comprehensive review of the specific uses of categorical grants for education.
- ▶ The CSDE tracks data on the efficacy of the uses of categorical grants.
- ▶ The CSDE implements a plan for reallocating categorical funds that are ineffectively used towards efforts specifically aimed at improving achievement for low-income students.

5(c)
3 points available

ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE COMMON CHART OF ACCOUNTS

- ▶ CT adopts new legislation requiring a statewide common chart of accounts to track comparable data on per-pupil expenditures.
- ▶ CT uses the common chart of accounts to compare expenditure data and qualitative data linked to student achievement at the school-, district-, and state-levels.
- ▶ CT develops and implements a plan for using the common chart of accounts to review the effectiveness of programs funded.

5(d)
3 points available

FIND COST EFFICIENCIES SUCH AS CONSOLIDATION AND SHARED SERVICES

- ▶ CT commissions a study to demonstrate how districts could benefit from various levels of shared services or consolidation.
- ▶ The CSDE oversees a pilot program on shared service models.
- ▶ The CSDE offers training on the specific benefits of shared services or consolidation for boards of education and district leaders.

5(e)
1 point available

APPLY FOR MORE FEDERAL AND PRIVATE GRANTS

- ▶ The CSDE contracts with or hires an individual—with a record of grant-writing success—to oversee CT's application for federal and private education grants.

▶ = COMPLETE ▶ = INCOMPLETE



Improve our lowest-performing schools by increasing authority, accountability, and time for learning.

TURN AROUND SCHOOLS

Total Points

COMPLETE

10

INCOMPLETE

7

I have 12 erasers. 8 of them
are broken. H



6(a)

TRANSFORM FAILING SCHOOLS THROUGH RESTRUCTURING, INNOVATION, AND COMPETITION

Connecticut receives **3 out of 4 points** for enacting and implementing legislation to facilitate the transformation of failing schools through restructuring, innovation, and competition.

Connecticut has recently increased the growth of charter, magnet, and innovative schools. In 2012, legislation was passed to provide funding for school districts to start local charter schools, and the 2013-2015 biennial budget additionally provides funding for four more state charter schools and five more local charter schools.⁴⁹

In terms of developing a statewide model for turnaround, in 2012, Connecticut enacted legislation that created the Commissioner's Network.⁵⁰ The Commissioner's Network strives to turn around the lowest-performing schools by partnering school and district leaders with the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). These leaders are asked to develop and implement school turnaround plans that address deficiencies and improve student achievement. Schools that are accepted into the Commissioner's Network are provided with flexibility measures by removing barriers such as collective bargaining agreements. Leadership is granted greater authority over staffing and scheduling, and is enabled to pursue partnerships with external organizations that have a demonstrated record of effective school improvement. The Commissioner's Network started with four schools during the 2012-2013 academic year, and additional funding was provided in the 2013-2015 biennial budget to expand the Network to include 21 schools.⁵¹

However, because the size of the Commissioner's Network is currently limited, Connecticut still needs to make these comprehensive turnaround strategies available to all of the lowest-performing 5% of schools.



3 out of 4 points



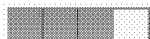
6(b)

BUILD A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMING FAILING SCHOOLS

Connecticut receives **3 out of 4 points** for adopting a new multi-tiered accountability and intervention framework to ensure that all schools and districts have the support they need to attain high student achievement.

Connecticut's waiver from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA),⁵² as well as legislation passed in 2012,⁵³ have developed a multi-tiered framework for accountability and intervention. The ESEA waiver describes differentiated interventions over schools based upon student growth factors (Turnaround, Focus, Review, and Schools of Distinction).⁵⁴ Similarly, the new legislation creates differentiated interventions for Alliance Districts and Commissioner's Network Schools, as well as creating five categories of schools based upon performance factors.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the law includes consequences and state actions associated with the five categories of schools, and allocates funding for intervention in the Alliance Districts.⁵⁶ Additionally, the 2013-2015 biennial budget provides \$900,000 for competitive grants to the lowest-performing school districts to support the creation or expansion of wraparound services to support students.⁵⁷

However, it is also important for us to develop a comprehensive analysis of the services needed to improve student achievement, such as social and health services.



3 out of 4 points

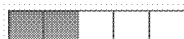
6(c)

PROVIDE NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE STATE LEVEL

Connecticut receives **2 out of 5 points** for establishing a School Turnaround Office with the authority to intervene aggressively in low-performing schools and districts.

In November of 2012, the State Board of Education (CSBE) appointed leadership to a reorganized School Turnaround Office, which reports to the Commissioner. The School Turnaround Office is actively intervening in the low-performing districts through the Alliance District program and Commissioner's Network.

However, we still need to grant the School Turnaround Office discretion over hiring decisions within the department, as well as the authority to create public-private partnerships to increase capacity, innovation and financial support for school transformation. Furthermore, it will be important for Connecticut to evaluate the effectiveness of the School Turnaround Office every three years.⁵⁸



2 out of 5 points

6(d)

MAXIMIZE LEARNING TIME THROUGH IN-SCHOOL AND EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Connecticut receives **2 out of 4 points** for maximizing instructional time. In August 2012, the CSBE passed a resolution to provide a consistent definition for truancy, and to provide guidance to parents in order to increase levels of attendance.⁵⁹

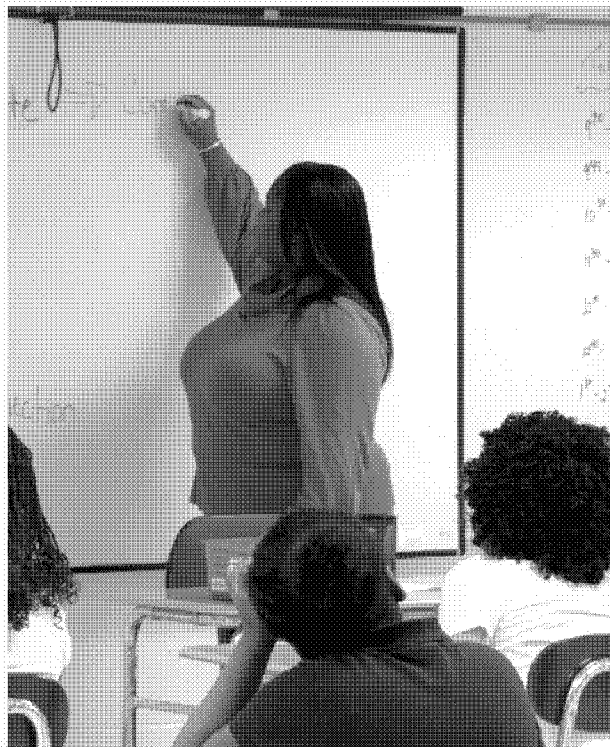
Furthermore, the Alliance Districts and Commissioner's Network Schools receive funding that can be used for interventions including extended day programming, as long as

the district or school provides an acceptable plan for the use of the added time.⁶⁰ Additionally, the CSDE has partnered with the TIME Collaborative to develop high-quality extended learning time in five of the Alliance Districts.^{61 62} These schools will serve as national models for effectively expanding the traditional public school day and/or year in order to improve student achievement.

However, it is still critical for the Commissioner and CSBE to use their existing authority to require the lowest-performing schools to extend the school day. They should also require these schools to extend the school year.



2 out of 4 points



Turn Around Schools Rubric

6(a)
4 points available

TRANSFORM FAILING SCHOOLS THROUGH RESTRUCTURING, INNOVATION, AND COMPETITION

- ▶ Connecticut passes legislation that provides superintendents and principals in the lowest-performing schools with authority on staffing, scheduling, and funding by removing barriers that inhibit dramatic change.
- ▶ The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) creates and implements an accountability system for transforming schools at the district/school leadership levels with clearly articulated commitments from and accountability to the CSDE School Turnaround Office.
- ▶ Comprehensive turnaround strategies are implemented in all of the lowest-performing 5% of schools.
- ▶ CT grants significant latitude to form charter, magnet, and other innovative schools models in partnership with external organization with a demonstrated record of effective school improvement.

6(b)
4 points available

BUILD A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMING FAILING SCHOOLS

- ▶ The CSDE develops and adopts a multi-tiered framework for accountability and intervention, based in part on student growth and achievement factors.
- ▶ This framework outlines differentiated intervention authorities over districts and schools.
- ▶ The CSDE develops a clearly defined action plan to hold schools and districts accountable for demonstrating improvement at each intervention level.
- ▶ There is a clear analysis of the additional wraparound services, including social and health services, that are needed to support student achievement.

6(c)
5 points available

PROVIDE NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE STATE LEVEL

- ▶ The CSDE is restructured to include a new School Turnaround Office that reports to the Commissioner.
- ▶ The Turnaround Office has discretion over hiring decisions within the department.
- ▶ The Turnaround Office exercises its authority in low-performing schools and districts.
- ▶ The Turnaround Office is authorized to create public-private partnerships to increase capacity, innovation, and financial support for school transformation.
- ▶ The Turnaround Office is re-evaluated for effectiveness every three years.

6(d)
4 points available

MAXIMIZE LEARNING TIME THROUGH IN-SCHOOL AND EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ The Commissioner of Education and/or the State Board of Education (CSBE) use their existing authorities to extend the school day for the lowest-performing schools.
- ▶ The Commissioner of Education and/or CSBE use their existing authorities to extend the school year for the lowest-performing schools.
- ▶ CT provides fiscal support to address additional costs of extended time to each school that has provided a plan for the use of the added time.
- ▶ CT establishes a consistent plan of action for identifying truant students and engaging with parents to achieve high levels of attendance.

▶ = COMPLETE ▶ = INCOMPLETE

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CCER Connecticut Council for EDUCATION REFORM

Every child deserves an exceptional education—without exception

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

2013 JUN 24 AM 11:30

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

DANNEL P. MALLOY

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 35

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, through Public Act 11-181, required the creation of a coordinated system of early care and education (“coordinated system”) by July 1, 2013, vested the authority to plan such coordinated system in the planning director within the Office of Policy and Management, and established the coordinated system as of July 1, 2013;

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, through Public Act 11-181, required the planning director to submit reports to the general assembly on details of the plan for the coordinated system;

WHEREAS, the planning director completed and submitted the plan for the coordinated system to the general assembly on March 21, 2013, recommending the consolidation of certain programs and staff into a new agency, the Office of Early Childhood, and recommending that the new agency serve as the lead agency for the coordinated system;

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, through sections 1 and 50 of Public Act 13-247 and sections 1 and 53 of Public Act 13-184, created the Office of Early Childhood, transferring the appropriations for programming and staff from various state agencies to the Office of Early Childhood, as recommended in the plan for the coordinated system;

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, through section 50 of Public Act 13-247 and section 53 of Public Act 13-184 grants certain authorities and transfers certain responsibilities to the executive director of the Office of Early Childhood;

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 4-38d of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Office is the successor agency to the state agencies from which programs were transferred into the Office pursuant to Public Act 13-247 and Public Act 13-184;

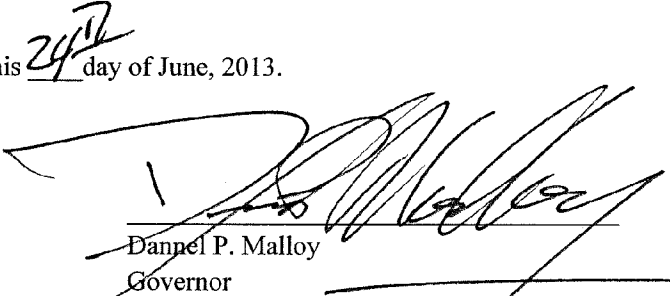
NOW, THEREFORE, I, DANNEL P. MALLOY, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of the State of Connecticut do hereby ORDER AND DIRECT:

1. The Office of Early Childhood (“Office”), shall be the lead agency for the administration of programs, funding for which was appropriated to the Office in section 1 of Public Act 13-247, and for the coordinated system established in Public Act 11-181, section 2, as codified in section 10-16bb of the Connecticut General Statutes.
2. The Office shall be led by the executive director established in section 50 of Public Act 13-184 and section 53 of Public Act 13-247. Within available appropriations, and as otherwise authorized by law, the executive director shall employ such other staff as necessary for the performance of the functions and duties of the Office.
3. The Office shall:
 - a. Administer programs, funding for which was appropriated to the Office in section 1 of Public Act 13-247;
 - b. Administer the coordinated system established by section 10-16bb of the Connecticut General Statutes;
 - c. Implement a communications strategy for outreach to families, service providers and policymakers;

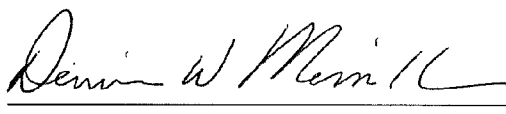
- d. Convene and coordinate with the Departments of Education, Social Services, Developmental Services, Children and Families, Public Health and the Office of Policy and Management to foster the coordinated system developed pursuant to section 10-16cc and established pursuant to Public Act 11-181, section 3, as codified in 10-16bb of the Connecticut General Statutes;
 - e. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including municipalities and local education agencies;
 - f. As necessary, enter into memoranda of agreement with and accept donations from nonprofit and philanthropic organizations to accomplish the purposes of the Office, in accordance with sections 10-16bb of the Connecticut General Statutes and any other provisions relating to the receipt of gifts, contributions, and other income from private sources by state agencies;
 - g. Study, within available appropriations or with funding received from private or philanthropic sources, the feasibility of moving the Birth to Three program from the Department of Developmental Services to the Office of Early Childhood by July 1, 2014, and present the results of such study to the Governor and co-chairs of the joint standing committee of the general assembly with cognizance of matters relating to appropriations by January 1, 2014; and
 - h. Enter into memoranda of agreement with other state agencies, as necessary, to coordinate the transfer of staff and responsibilities related to the administration of programs appropriated to the Office in Public Act 13-247.
4. All Executive Branch agencies shall collaborate and cooperate with the Office and enter into such memoranda of agreement as are necessary for the administration of the coordinated system and for the transition and transfer of staff and responsibilities transferred to the Office of Early Childhood pursuant to PA 13-247, and Public Act 13-184.
5. Nothing in this Order shall be deemed to contradict or supersede any statute or constitutional provision, and this Order is not intended to suspend, modify or revoke any statutory provision enacted by the General Assembly.

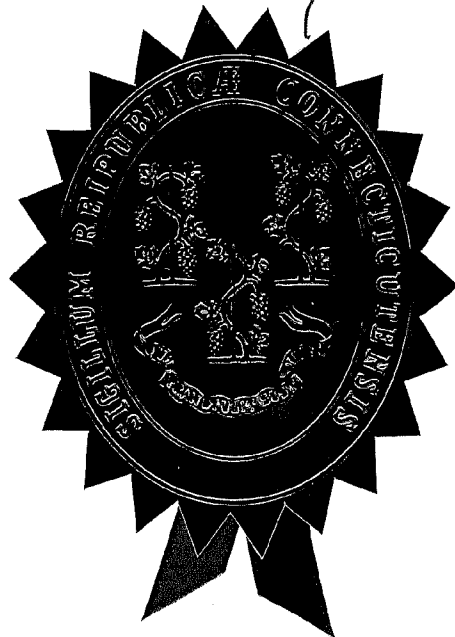
This Order shall take effect immediately.

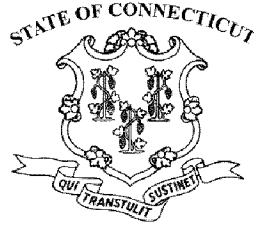
Dated at Hartford, Connecticut this 24th day of June, 2013.


Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

By His Excellency's Order


Denise Merrill
Secretary of the State





Substitute Senate Bill No. 1103

Public Act No. 11-181

***AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COORDINATED SYSTEM OF EARLY
CARE AND EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-16z of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

(a) There is established the Early Childhood Education Cabinet. The cabinet shall consist of: (1) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee, (2) one representative from the Department of Education who is responsible for programs required under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as amended from time to time, appointed by the Commissioner of Education, (3) the Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's designee, (4) a representative from an institution of higher education in this state appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education, (5) the Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's designee, (6) the Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the commissioner's designee, (7) the Commissioner of [Mental Health and Addiction Services] Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee, (8) the executive director of the Commission

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on Children, or the executive director's designee, (9) the project director of the Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office, (10) a [representative from a Head Start program] parent or guardian of a child who attends or attended a school readiness program appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, (11) a representative of a local provider of early childhood education appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, (12) a representative of the Connecticut Family Resource Center Alliance appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, (13) a representative of a state funded child care center appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, (14) two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom is a member of the House of Representatives and one of whom is a parent who has a child attending a school in a priority school district, [(13)] (15) two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom is a member of the Senate and one of whom is a representative of a public elementary school with a prekindergarten program, [(14)] (16) two appointed by the Governor, one of whom is a representative of the Connecticut Head Start Association and one of whom is a representative of the business or philanthropic community in this state, [appointed by the Governor,] and [(15)] (17) the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee. The chairperson of the council shall be appointed from among its members by the Governor.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2011*) (a) On and after July 1, 2013, there shall be a coordinated system of early care and education and child development. The coordinated system of early care and education and child development shall consist of comprehensive and aligned policies, responsibilities, practices and services for young children and their families, including prenatal care and care for children from birth to eight years of age, inclusive, to ensure optimal health, safety and learning for each child, and that are in accordance

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with the plan developed by the planning director pursuant to section 3 of this act.

(b) The coordinated system of early care and education and child development shall (1) create a unified set of reporting requirements for the programs described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 3 of this act, for the purpose of collecting the data elements necessary to perform quality assessments and longitudinal analysis; (2) compare and analyze the data collected pursuant to reporting requirements created under subdivision (1) of this subsection with the data collected in the state-wide public school information system, pursuant to section 10-10a of the general statutes, for population-level analysis of children and families; (3) develop and update appropriate early learning standards and assessment tools for children from birth to five years of age, inclusive, that are age and developmentally appropriate and that are aligned with existing learning standards as of July 1, 2013, and assessment tools for students in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive; (4) continually monitor and evaluate all early childhood education and child care programs and services, focusing on program outcomes in satisfying the health, safety, developmental and educational needs of all children; (5) develop indicators that assess strategies designed to strengthen the family through parental involvement in a child's development and education, including children with special needs; (6) increase the availability of early childhood education and child care programs and services and encourage the providers of such programs and services to work together to create multiple options that allow families to participate in programs that serve the particular needs of each family; (7) provide information and technical assistance to persons seeking early childhood education and child care programs and services; (8) assist state agencies and municipalities in obtaining available federal funding for early childhood education and child care programs and services; (9) provide technical assistance and consultation to licensed

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providers of early childhood education and child care programs and services and assist any potential provider of such programs and services in obtaining the necessary licensure and certification; (10) create, implement and maintain a quality rating and improvement system that covers home-based, center-based and school-based early child care and learning; (11) maintain a system of accreditation facilitation to assist early childhood education and child care programs and services in achieving national standards and program improvement; (12) create partnerships between state agencies and philanthropic organizations to assist in the implementation of the coordinated system of early care and education and child development; (13) align the system's policy and program goals with those of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, pursuant to section 10-16z of the general statutes, and the Head Start advisory committee, pursuant to section 10-16n of the general statutes; (14) ensure a coordinated and comprehensive state-wide system of professional development for providers of early childhood education and child care programs and services; (15) develop family-centered services that assist families in their communities; (16) provide families with opportunities for choice in services including quality child care; (17) integrate early childhood education and special education services; (18) emphasize targeted research-based interventions; (19) organize services into a coherent system; (20) coordinate a comprehensive and accessible delivery system for early childhood education and child care services; (21) focus on performance measures to ensure that services are accountable, effective and accessible to the consumer; (22) promote universal access to early childhood care and education; (23) ensure nonduplication of monitoring and evaluation; (24) encourage, promote and coordinate funding for the establishment and administration of local and regional early childhood councils that implement local and regional birth-to-eight systems; and (25) perform any other activities that will assist in the provision of early childhood education and child care programs and services.

Public Act No. 11-181***4 of 9***

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(c) The coordinated system of early care and education and child development shall collaborate with local and regional early childhood councils to implement the coordinated system of early care and education and child development at the local level. Such early childhood councils shall: (1) Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for an early childhood system for the community served by such early childhood council, (2) develop policy and program planning, (3) encourage community participation by emphasizing substantial parental involvement, (4) collect, analyze and evaluate data with a focus on program and service outcomes, (5) allocate resources, and (6) perform any other functions that will assist in the provision of early childhood programs and services. Such early childhood councils may enter into memoranda of agreement with the local or regional school readiness council, described in section 10-16r of the general statutes, of the town or region served by such early childhood council to perform the duties and functions of a school readiness council, in accordance with the provisions of said section 10-16r, or if no such local or regional school readiness council exists for the town or region of such early childhood council, perform the duties and functions of a school readiness council, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-16r of the general statutes.

(d) The coordinated system of early care and education and child development may enter into memoranda of agreement with and accept donations from nonprofit and philanthropic organizations to accomplish the purposes of this section.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2011*) (a) On or before July 15, 2011, the Governor shall appoint, in consultation with the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, established under section 10-16z of the general statutes, a planning director for the planning and development of the coordinated system of early care and education and child development described in section 2 of this act, provided such appointment is made

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within available appropriations or funded by donations from private sources or federal funds to cover the costs of carrying out the provisions of this section. The planning director shall be within the Office of Policy and Management.

(b) (1) The planning director shall develop a plan for the coordinated system of early care and education and child development. Such plan shall consolidate existing early childhood education and child care programs and services serving children from birth to eight years of age, inclusive, into a coordinated system that attempts to (A) reduce the academic achievement gap, (B) increase participation in early childhood education programs, (C) increase parent engagement, family literacy and parenting skills, (D) increase oral language development, (E) increase social competence, (F) decrease special education placements, and (G) support parents and guardians of young children to find employment and to remain employed and encourage such parents and guardians to attend work training programs. Consolidation may include, but not be limited to, school readiness programs, Head Start programs, the family resource center program, established pursuant to section 10-4o of the general statutes, child care facilities, licensing and services described in section 8-210 of the general statutes, the birth-to-three program, established pursuant to section 17a-248 of the general statutes, professional development activities relating to early childhood education and any other relevant early childhood programs and services.

(2) In developing such plan, the planning director shall (A) consider opportunities for consolidation between and within agencies to reduce redundancy and to improve the focus on positive outcomes for children and families; (B) seek areas of consolidation between and within agencies; (C) provide for the creation of memoranda of agreement between the coordinated system of early care and education and child development and nonprofit and philanthropic organizations;

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(D) identify opportunities to align services and meet the holistic needs of children and families; (E) implement an accountability framework to measure program and services outcomes; (F) identify common requirements for funding from various sources and identify waiver provisions related to such requirements that can be used to improve service delivery in the state; (G) identify barriers under state or federal law that inhibit effective consolidation of functions or utilization of interagency agreements; (H) consult with qualified local and regional planning groups; and (I) focus the memoranda of agreement to relevant program areas, such as, maternal and child health, literacy, family support, financial planning and early care and education.

(c) For purposes of the development of the plan for the coordinated system of early care and education and child development, the planning director may enter into memoranda of agreement with and accept donations from nonprofit and philanthropic organizations.

(d) The Departments of Education, Social Services, Public Health, Children and Families, Developmental Services and Higher Education shall assist the planning director in the planning and development of the plan for the coordinated system of early care and education and child development.

(e) (1) On and after October 1, 2011, until July 1, 2013, the planning director shall report quarterly to the Early Childhood Education Cabinet. Such report may include, but not be limited to, (A) recommendations regarding the consolidation of agencies to improve coordination within the coordinated system of early care and education and child development, (B) suggestions regarding how federal, state and local resources can be combined to maximize efficiencies in the system and outcomes for children and families, (C) suggestions to improve the manner in which state and local early childhood education initiatives are coordinated so as to provide holistic, affordable, high quality early education for young children,

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(D) recommendations for improvements to the coordinated system of early care and education and child development, and (E) assurances that the provisions of section 8-210 of the general statutes are being preserved in the planning and development of the coordinated system of early care and education and child development.

(2) On and after January 1, 2012, until July 1, 2013, the planning director shall semiannually report to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations, human services and education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. Such report may include, but not be limited to, (A) recommendations regarding the consolidation of agencies to improve coordination within the coordinated system of early care and education and child development, (B) suggestions regarding how federal, state and local resources can be combined to maximize efficiencies in the system and outcomes for children and families, (C) suggestions to improve the manner in which state and local early childhood education initiatives are coordinated so as to provide holistic, high quality early education for young children, (D) recommendations for improvements to the coordinated system of early care and education and child development, and (E) assurances that the provisions of section 8-210 of the general statutes are being preserved in the planning and development of the coordinated system of early care and education and child development.

(3) On or before January 30, 2013, the planning director shall report to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations, human services and education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. Such report shall include recommendations as to which department shall be the lead agency and where the staff of the coordinated system of early care and education and child development

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will be located.

Sec. 4. (*Effective July 1, 2011*) For purposes of the planning and development of the coordinated system of early care and education and child development, the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, pursuant to section 10-16z of the general statutes, the director of the Connecticut Head Start Collaboration Office and the Head Start advisory committee, pursuant to section 10-16n of the general statutes, and the Accreditation Facilitation Project of Connecticut Charts-A-Course shall be based in the Department of Education, and may work with nonprofit and philanthropic organizations.

Sec. 5. Section 10-16y of the general statutes is repealed. (*Effective July 1, 2011*)

Approved July 13, 2011

A Plan for an Early Childhood System for Connecticut: The Office of Early Childhood

March 21, 2013

A Report of the Early Childhood Planning Team

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Director

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I. Executive Summary

The scientific evidence is clear – investing in the wellbeing of young children lays the foundation for a prosperous and sustainable society. It is in Connecticut’s interest to ensure that families have access to the services necessary to promote the comprehensive developmental needs of their young children. Yet, Connecticut currently has a “non-system” for early childhood. There is no central agency that is held accountable for improved outcomes for young children in the state. Consequently, Connecticut lacks a unified vision for early childhood policy and service delivery.

In 2011 the legislature passed Public Act 11-181 to correct this problem, calling for a plan for the creation of a comprehensive early childhood system for Connecticut. Governor Malloy answered the call and appointed an Early Childhood Planning Director in May 2012. After an intense eight-month planning process that engaged numerous key stakeholders in Connecticut and national experts, the Governor proposed the creation of the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). According to the Governor’s plan, the OEC will be a new agency with all of the authority and responsibilities of other state agencies. The OEC will lead to increased efficiency and responsiveness, a more focused policy agenda, the capability for a unified data system and consequent accountability. The result will mean consistent quality standards and requirements, and a coordinated mechanism for accessing information.

According to the Governor’s proposal, the OEC will bring together programs from five different agencies – State Department of Education (SDE), Department of Social Services (DSS), Board of Regents (BOR), Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and Department of Public Health (DPH). It will be assigned to SDE for administrative purposes only, meaning SDE will coordinate with the OEC to manage the new agency’s personnel, fiscal, legal, and information technology needs.

Legislative approval is required to create the Office of Early Childhood. In the event of its passage, implementation will occur in two phases between July 1, 2013 and July 1, 2014. Staggering the OEC’s implementation in two phases over one year enables the new agency to account for the complexity of consolidating multiple programs without weakening the intended impact of such a move. Programs from SDE, DSS, and BOR will move in Phase I; while programs in DPH, DDS, and one additional program in SDE and DSS each will move in Phase II. A total of approximately 95 state employees will transition into the OEC during this time, with roughly 30 employees moving in Phase I and the remaining 65 moving in Phase II.

The Office of Early Childhood Planning is currently working with teams from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the Office of Labor Relations (OLR), and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to ensure a smooth transition should the legislature vote to create the OEC. Numerous state employees are devoted to planning for this transition with the clear understanding that the OEC may not become a reality. As arduous as this planning process is, the teams that have come together recognize that it is better to prepare for something that may never come into existence than for July 1, 2013 to arrive without a plan to maintain services for children and families. The central focus of implementation planning is to ensure that there will be neither interruption of services for children and families nor delay of payment to providers during the transition.

The move to create the Office of Early Childhood is bold. Connecticut will join the ranks of a handful of states – Massachusetts, Washington, and Georgia – that lead the nation with truly comprehensive early childhood systems. Bold it may be, but Connecticut’s move toward creation of the OEC is good policy. A unified vision for early childhood leads to better outcomes for children, improved communication with parents, higher standards for providers, and more effective decision making by policymakers.

II. Introduction

A. The Importance of Early Childhood and a System

The scientific evidence is clear – investing in the wellbeing of young children lays the foundation for a prosperous and sustainable society. Across the country states are working to align programs and policies for children to realize the promise of this science. The report that follows is a bold proposal that would bring Connecticut’s state governance structure for early childhood programs in line with cutting edge thinking concerning the science of child development.

In 2007 the Harvard Center on the Developing Child prepared a summary of the science of early children to guide policy makers. Drawing widely from the fields of neuroscience and developmental-behavioral research, this panel of experts concluded that “early experience determines whether a child’s developing brain architecture provides a strong or weak foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health.” (*A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy*, p. 3)

The science of child development confirms:

- Experiences in first five years of life impact outcomes later in childhood and into adulthood
The Perry Preschool project demonstrated long term benefits to children who have experienced a quality preschool program. Advantages went beyond academic performance, impacting their economic and social wellbeing at ages 27 and 40. (See Figure 1)
- All aspects of young children’s development are interrelated and are inseparable from the wellbeing of the family

For young children in particular it is not possible to promote intellectual growth without taking into account health and mental health. Services directed to children at this age are necessarily comprehensive.

Effective Early Childhood Policies are Grounded in Science

“By creating and implementing effective early childhood programs and policies, society can ensure that children have a solid foundation for a productive future. Four decades of evaluation research have identified innovative programs that can improve a wide range of outcomes with continued impact into the adult years. Effective interventions are grounded in neuroscience and child development research and guided by evidence regarding what works for what purpose. With careful attention to quality and continuous improvement, such programs can be cost-effective and produce positive outcomes for children.”

A policy brief of:

- NGA Center for Best Practices
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- Harvard University’s Center for the Developing Child

<http://developingchild.harvard.edu>

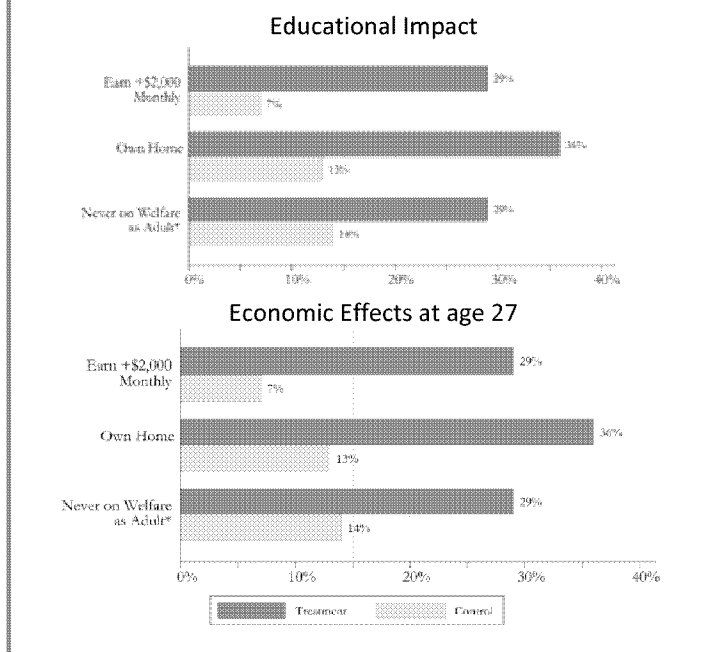
In addition effective early childhood services address the needs of parents as well as children. The impact of family socioeconomic factors even before age three is evidenced in the limited vocabularies of children in low-income families (see Figure 2). This two-generational focus is a central and unique aspect of early childhood services.

- Prevention and early intervention is more effective and cost efficient than later remediation

“Ensuring that children have positive experiences prior to entering school is likely to lead to better outcomes than remediation programs at a later age, and significant up-front costs can generate a strong return on investment.”

(*A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy*) The cost effectiveness of a strong early childhood strategy is shown in Figure 3.

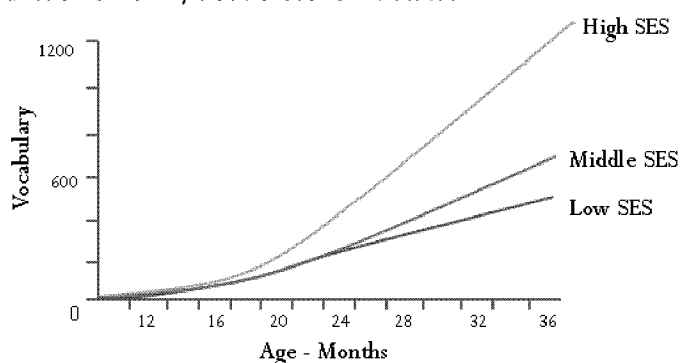
Figure 1: Impact of Quality Preschool (treatment group) versus no Preschool (control group) (Perry Preschool Project)



Policy Implications

The policy implications of the science of child development are also evident. It is in the state’s interest to ensure that families have access to the services they require to support the comprehensive

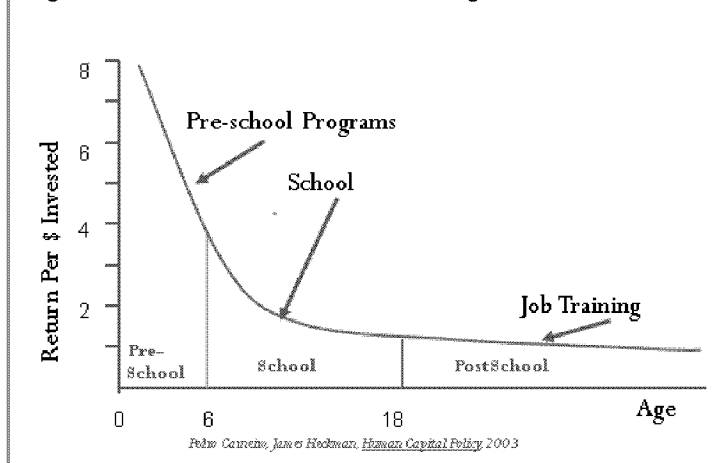
Figure 2. Differences in Vocabulary Growth in first 3 years as a function of Family’s Socio-economic Status



B. Han & T. Rivley. Meaningful Differences in Everyday Experiences of Young American Children 1995

developmental needs of their young children. The cross-disciplinary nature of these services has led policy experts to propose state governance models that integrate funding streams and programs typically administered by separate state agencies, such as education, health, and social services. The report that follows describes the current early childhood “non-system” as it exists now in Connecticut. It proposes a bold new governance model, creating a new interdisciplinary agency that aligns policy and science

Figure 3: Return on Investment across Ages



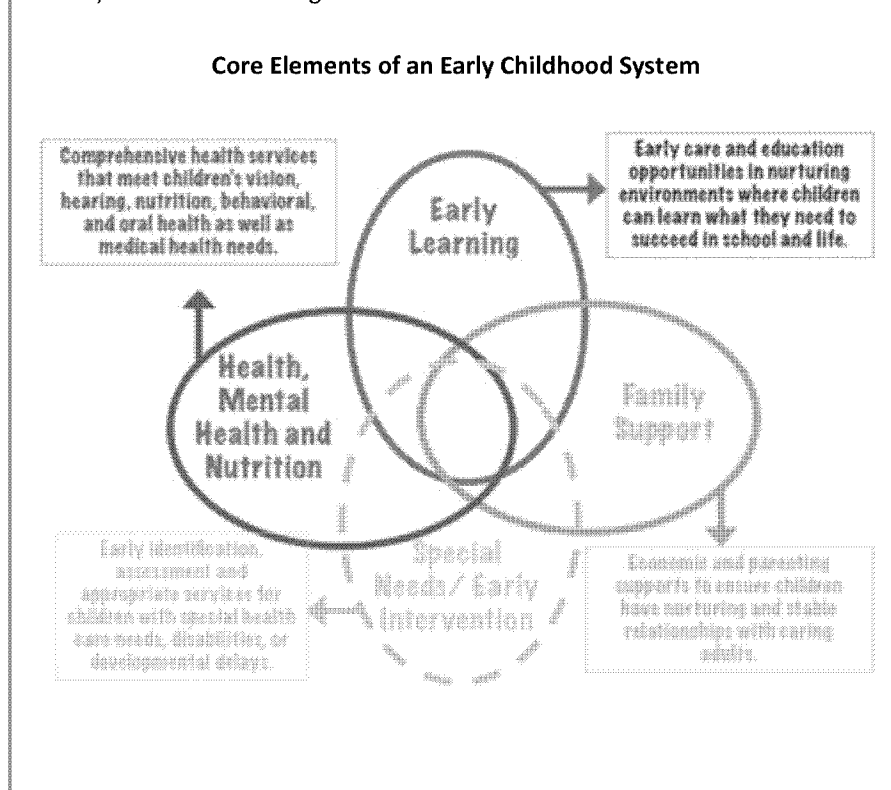
and oversees the state's investment in young children. This proposal has been guided by the work of experts from the BUILD Initiative, who have supported other states in creating more effective early childhood governance models. A comprehensive early childhood system includes four core elements--early learning; family support; special needs and early intervention; and health, mental health and nutrition (see Figure 4). BUILD's experience with other states has demonstrated that successful

governance structures require the unwavering support of the Governor, a clear policy direction from the legislature, and a strong early childhood leader who has budgetary and policy control over key early childhood programs and funding streams. When these factors are in place, a unified early childhood governance structure can provide the state with:

1. Coordination across programs and services
2. Alignment to promote all aspects of child development
3. Efficiency which avoids duplication and provides better value
4. Accountability for quality, equity and results

Most importantly, a coordinated system will provide children and families with consistent and readily available information, clear quality standards, and improved access to comprehensive services. Access to higher quality early childhood programs will provide a solid foundation for Connecticut's children.

Figure 4: National Early Childhood Systems Working Group (an initiative of BUILD) Core Elements Diagram



B. The Charge from the Legislature

In 2011 the Connecticut legislature passed Public Act 11-181 (see appendix A), landmark legislation calling for an Early Childhood System in Connecticut that would integrate Connecticut's early childhood programs and services. In the spring of 2012 Governor Malloy appointed an Early Childhood Planning Director, Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor, to lead the Early Childhood Planning Team in the design of an Early Childhood System that would improve the delivery of services to the state's youngest children and their families. The addition of two part-time consultants, Dr. Carlota Schechter and Mara Siladi, completed the three-member Team that began working in May of 2012.

Vision

A coordinated system of programs and policies aimed at promoting optimal growth and development of all children in Connecticut during the early childhood period (birth to age five).

C. Vision and Guiding Principles

Taking guidance from the legislation, the Early Childhood Planning Team envisioned an Early Childhood System as a coordinated system of programs and policies aimed at promoting optimal growth and development of all children in the early childhood period. With that end goal in mind, the Team adopted a set of child- and family-centered guiding values and principles for which were developed by the national Early Childhood Systems Working Group and added several of their own to reflect Connecticut's commitment to research-based practices and central role of local community in early childhood systems.

Guiding Values and Principles

- Reach all children and families, and as early as possible, with needed services and supports;
- Ease access for families and transitions for children;
- Value parents as decision makers and leaders;
- Ensure stability and continuity of services along a continuum from prenatal into school entry and beyond;
- Genuinely include and effectively accommodate children with special needs;
- Reflect and respect the strengths, needs, values, languages, languages, cultures of children and families; and
- Catalyze and maximize investment and foster innovation.
- Honor the individual strengths and knowledge of local communities
- Reflect current science, research, and evidence-based practices

D. Information Gathering

Planning Team's Outreach Efforts

In the late spring of 2012 the Planning Team initiated a multi-pronged information gathering process that included:

- Extensive phone and on-site consultation with experts from The BUILD Initiative, national leaders in early childhood systems building, and the federal Office of Child Care
- Interagency commissioners meetings organized by the Governor's office and attended by the Director of the Office of Early Childhood Planning, the Governor's Policy Director, the Commissioners of the Departments of Education, Children and Families, Social Services, and Public Health, the Undersecretary of Poverty Policy and the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management
- A listening tour with Connecticut stakeholder groups that engaged all sectors of the early care and education field; non-profit organizations representing community and economic development, mental health, health, education, and social services; business leaders; and philanthropy.
- A survey of over 3,000 parents conducted out of the Governor's office
- A series of parent forums reaching approximately 200 parents across the state coordinated by Connecticut Parent Power and the Commission on Children
- On-site visits to local early childhood programs and services

Planning Team's Listening Tours

- Expert national consultants
- National leaders
- Parent groups
- Regional organizations
- State Wide organizations
- Local community councils/
Discovery groups
- Early care and education
providers
- State wide public and private
comprehensive service
providers
- Cabinet Leadership Team and
workgroups
- Funder stakeholder groups
- State agency partners
- Higher education partners
- Business leaders

When meeting with stakeholders and parents, the members of the Early Childhood Planning Team focused the conversation on three topics:

1. What is working in the current early childhood system that you would not want to lose?
2. What is not working that you would like to see changed?
3. What is your vision for an Early Childhood System for Connecticut?

The key messages conveyed on the Listening Tour and Parent Forums can be found in the text box. The results of the Parent Outreach Initiative are summarized in Appendix A.

Key Points Raised in Listening Tours & Parent Forums

- Parents do not want to lose access to child care subsidies
- Community councils do not want to lose autonomy
- Parents would like easier access to information on services, information on the comparative quality of programs, and information about transitions from preschool to the public schools
- Center-based early care and education providers would like more streamlined reporting requirements and a licensing system that is supportive and focused on child development rather than punitive and focused on compliance.
- Home-based family child care providers would like access to professional development and to be part of a Quality Rating and Improvement System
- Communities would like readily available and accurate data
- Some communities feel disconnected from the home visiting program selection process and would like home visiting to be fully integrated into their local early childhood delivery system.

Connecticut-based Research Provided by National Consultants

Consultants from the BUILD Initiative, whose services were made possible through the generous support of the CT Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, conducted research and interviews to inform the Office of Early Childhood Planning. They prepared two reports based on their findings:

- “Developing an Early Childhood Governance Structure: Key Considerations for Connecticut,” an analysis of early childhood systems building efforts in other states (see Appendix B).
- “Key Themes Report: Interviews with Connecticut Key Informants Regarding Early Care and Education System Improvement,” a summary of key points from a series of confidential interviews with more than 40 Connecticut stakeholders, including agency Commissioners and leaders outside of state government (see Appendix C).

The plan outlined in this document for an early childhood governance structure is based on the results of these intensive information gathering efforts.

The BUILD Initiative

“The BUILD Initiative helps participating states build a coordinated system of programs, policies and services—a comprehensive early learning system—that is responsive to the needs of families, careful in the use of private and public resources, and effective in preparing our youngest children for a successful future, including school readiness.”

www.buildinitiative.org

III. Early Childhood in Connecticut

A. Historical Context

The goal of creating an Early Childhood System in Connecticut is not new. In 2002 the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau provided funding for states to develop plans for an early childhood system of services that included family-centered access to health, socio-emotional health, early care and education, parenting education, and family support services. As a result the Connecticut Early Childhood Partners initiative brought together eight state agencies and statewide institutions, under the leadership of the Department of Public Health, to create a Strategic Plan to meet the needs of all families so their children arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.

This work continued with the establishment of an Early Childhood Cabinet in 2005. The cabinet created a strong vision for Connecticut's youngest children – Ready by 5, Fine by 9 – and identified three goals to reach this vision. The Research and Policy Council prepared a framework for the fiscal 2008 and 2009 state budget years, outlining 50 action steps required to meet these goals. The state budget was generous to early childhood and movement was made on individual action items. However, services for young children were distributed across many different agencies and the Cabinet lacked the authority to direct and coordinate the work of these various agencies in order to fully realize its goals.

During the same period the federal government once again encouraged states to coordinate early childhood services. In 2007 federal funding for early childhood became contingent upon the development of cross-sector State Advisory Councils. Four years later the federal Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services teamed up to create the Early Learning Challenge, a special Race to the Top competition focused on early childhood system development. Connecticut reorganized the Early Childhood Education Cabinet and, using funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), established work groups to address the federal goal of early childhood system development. The new Cabinet, now guided by the federal funding requirements, reorganized its efforts towards goals outlined in the federal Head Start Act of 2007.

Through the labors of the many dedicated members of

Ready by 5 and Fine by 9

“To help ensure that all of the state’s young children, regardless of where they live, are ‘Ready by 5 and Fine by 9,’ the Cabinet proposes **three goals** for the children of the State of Connecticut, to:

- reach appropriate developmental milestones from birth to age 5;
- begin kindergarten with the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed for success in school; and
- have K-3 education experiences that extend children’s birth-to-5 learning and ensure consistent progress in achieving reading mastery.”

*Connecticut’s Early Childhood
Investment Framework,
October 2006*

its workgroups the Cabinet made progress on:

- Developing early learning standards;
- Conceptualizing a coordinated data system;
- Promoting a coordinated system of family involvement and home visitation;
- Improving the professional development of the early childhood workforce; and
- Developing a model for a statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System

Despite these efforts, this Cabinet is also limited in its role. The Cabinet does not have the authority to ensure that activities across agencies are coordinated. For example, a Bureau Chief at the State Department of Education, co-chairs the Early Learning Standards workgroup, and so was in a position to align the early childhood standards with the k-12 standards.

However, the Cabinet does not have the influence to ensure that the new standards form the basis of state early childhood programs in other agencies such as: the Birth-to-Three program in the Department of Developmental Services, home visiting programs in the Departments of Health and Social Services, or child care programs licensed by the Department of Health.

In summary, the current Cabinet, as the one before, has made progress in moving Connecticut towards a more coordinated state level early childhood system. However, these gains have been dependent to a great extent on the good will of the individuals involved in this work. The Cabinet is not empowered to require coordinated efforts among state agencies and thus progress is hard won, incomplete, and difficult to sustain. In short, the Cabinet is not substitute for an effective, accountable Early Childhood System.

Early Childhood Education Cabinet 4 Priority Areas

- Quality Data Systems
- Early Learning Standards
- Family Involvement/ Home Visiting
- Professional Development/Workforce

Addressing these four priorities will assist Connecticut in meeting the responsibilities of the Cabinet as stated in the Head Start Act of 2007.

Federal Funding

In 2011 a coalition of Connecticut early childhood experts prepared a comprehensive application for the federal Early Learning Challenge grant, which involved gathering information from many agencies across the state. Despite this wide-ranging effort, Connecticut was not among the first group of nine states to be funded or the second group of five states selected in 2012. The federal government is looking to states to integrate early childhood services supported through four different federal funding streams:

- Child Care Development Fund
- Head Start Collaboration
- Home Visiting
- Part C of IDEA.

States that were successful in the Early Learning Challenge competition have created governance structures that allow them to do this. Two of the first round winners, Massachusetts and Washington, created separate state agencies that consolidated all of their early childhood programs. The other seven states funded in round one direct their federal early childhood funds to a small number of state agencies so as to integrate federal and state funding streams more effectively. (See Appendix B for a full comparison of how each of the states manages early childhood federal funding streams.) In Connecticut, each of the four major sources of federal funds for early childhood services are managed by a separate state agency without an overarching mechanism for coordination. The following plan would bring these funding streams into one state agency in order to maximize the effectiveness of this federal investment on behalf of Connecticut's children.

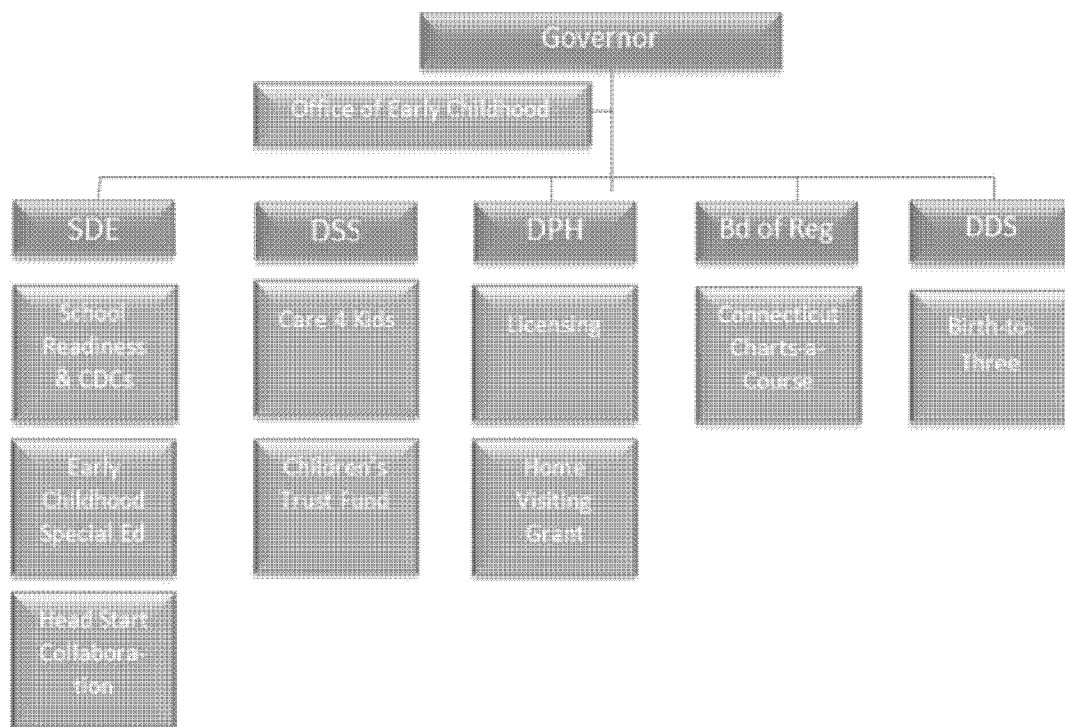
Figure 5: Connecticut Agencies Receiving Federal Funds for Early Childhood Programs

Federal Funding for Early Childhood	CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT FUND (CCDF)	HEAD START COLLABORATION	HOME VISITING (MIECHV)	PART C (IDEA)
Receiving agency In Connecticut (4 different agencies)	Department of Social Services*	Department of Education	Department of Public Health	Department of Developmental Services

* Then distributed to DPH for child care licensing and Board of Regents for professional development.

B. Current state programs

The four state agencies that receive federal funding for early childhood (DSS, SDE, DPH and DDS) are not the only state agencies in which early childhood services reside in Connecticut. An office within the Board of Regents delivers professional development and program improvement services for early care and education programs across the state. Besides the Department of Children and Families (DCF) which provides child welfare programs and services for our most at risk young children, five different state agencies manage early childhood programs as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Connecticut Agencies with Early Childhood Services

Challenges of a Non-System for Early Childhood

Early childhood is a small part of each of these larger agencies and the early childhood services are often aligned more closely with the broader mission of the agency rather than with a single vision consistent with the needs of young children and their families. It is difficult to implement a coordinated vision for these services as long as they are spread across different agencies and no single agency is held accountable for young children's healthy development. Furthermore, it is challenging to identify gaps, duplications, or redundancies in the state services offered. Collecting accurate and timely data is an incredible challenge when early childhood data is distributed across multiple agencies, as

States across the Country have "Non-systems" for Early Childhood Services

"Tax-payer funded early care and education has grown dramatically in recent years, resulting in a multiplicity of programs and funding streams at the federal, state and local levels. Each has its own mission, regulatory requirements, and constituency. Taken together, they form what has been called a "patchwork quilt" or "non-system" of early care and education. They are seldom coordinated with each other, the result being that opportunities to broadly raise program quality and access, work collaboratively to gain efficiencies, and otherwise maximize the public's investment are invariably lost."

NIEER Policy Brief April 2011, Issue 23
"Improving Public Financing for Early Learning Programs"

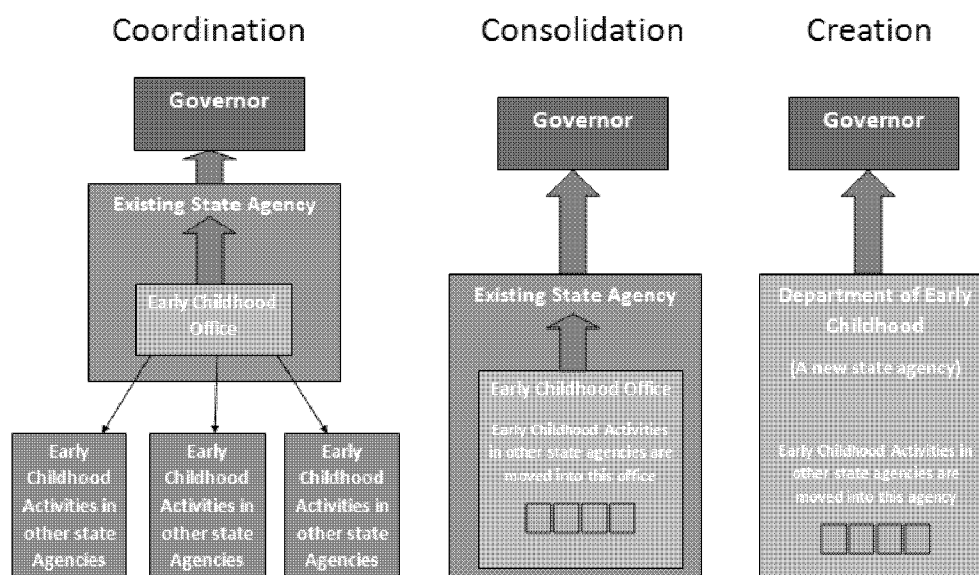
it is with our current early childhood system. The state has no way to know if the same child is receiving services from multiple agencies and, consequently, no way to know if the state is providing that child with an effective combination of services that would lead to her optimal growth and development.

Most importantly, families find it difficult to access information about services for their children. This is particularly a challenge considering that the needs of young children and their families are necessarily interconnected and cannot be neatly parsed as health, social or educational in the same manner in which our current early childhood service delivery system exists. Early childhood services are distinctive from the services offered by other agencies in that education, social development, and physical and mental health are interdependent during this developmental period and thus early childhood programs involve services for children as well as their parents.

C. National Models

Connecticut is not alone in these challenges. Other states have identified a similar lack of coordination when it comes to early childhood services and have addressed this with a variety of governance models. Increasingly, with incentives from federal grant programs that promote early childhood system building and technical support and guidance from national early childhood experts, states are moving to consolidate early childhood services. Interestingly, there is not a single early childhood governance structure that works best for every state. The BUILD Initiative has identified three different forms of early childhood governance found in states across the country: creation, consolidation, and coordination.

Figure 7: Three Early Childhood Governance Models



In the **coordination** model, individual agencies coordinate early childhood programs and services among

each other, with each agency maintaining authority over and accountability for their respective programs and services. Connecticut's current early childhood programs could be considered a loose coordination model.

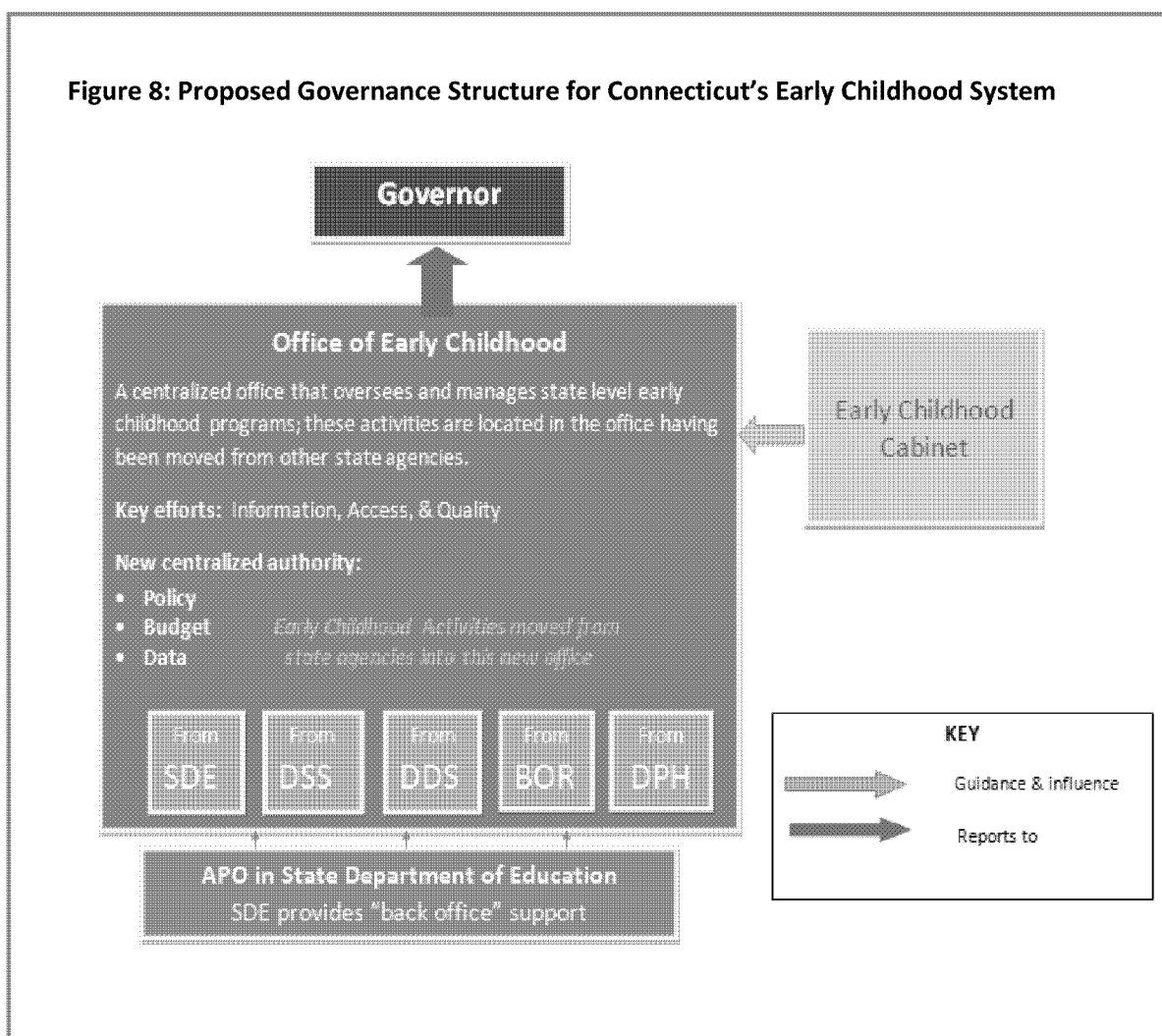
In the **consolidation** model, states create a centralized office focused on early childhood that resides within another agency, often state departments of education or social services. The benefit of this model is the ability to consolidate programs without the significant costs of operating an entirely separate agency. The risk this model presents is that the early childhood vision and mission become secondary to or subsumed by the agenda of the larger host agency.

In the **creation** model, states create a new agency entirely devoted to early childhood. This model eliminates the silos that hamper the efficiency and efficacy of early childhood service delivery. Moreover, the creation of one agency devoted to early childhood services elevates the stature of early childhood policy and the importance of quality early childhood programs in the lives of children. This model is the most costly of the three due to the costs incurred when creating a new agency that requires its own human resources, legal, fiscal, information technology staff. (See Appendix B for a full description of the three early childhood governance models.)

IV. Proposed Governance Model for Connecticut – The Office of Early Childhood

After an intensive eight-month planning process, the Office of Early Childhood Planning recommended to Governor Malloy a hybrid early childhood governance structure combining advantages of the creation and consolidation models. According to the Governor’s proposal, a new Office of Early Childhood will consolidate all early childhood funding streams and programs currently dispersed across the Departments of Developmental Services, Education, Public Health, Social Services and the Board of Regents, allowing for a concerted focus on the “Ready by 5” goal for children through a unified policy, budget and data system. As a result, state services will be more effective and efficient, and families will have access to quality services and information.

Figure 8: Proposed Governance Structure for Connecticut’s Early Childhood System



Consistent with the creation model, the proposed Office of Early Childhood will be a new state agency with the full authority of all other state agencies and it will report directly to the Governor. However, in this proposal the OEC will be assigned to SDE for Administrative Purposes Only (APO). The State Department of Education will provide “back office” support services such as human resources, fiscal, legal, and information technology to the OEC. This maintains the advantages of the creation model while eliminating the expense of duplicating support services. The Connecticut statute on Administrative Purposes Only provides for this possibility and clearly stipulates that the nested agency has complete authority over its own functions, budget, personnel and contracts.

A. Programs to be Moved

After careful analysis the Office of Early Childhood Planning identified state agency programs that are primarily focused on services to children from birth to age five. The following early childhood programs which have been housed in five separate state agencies will be brought together in this new Office of Early Childhood:

1. Board of Regents
 - a. Connecticut Charts-a-Course
2. Department of Developmental Services
 - a. Birth-to-Three
3. Department of Education
 - a. Early Learning and Development (including School Readiness, Child Development Centers, and Head Start)
 - b. Early Childhood Special Education
4. Department of Health
 - a. Child Day Care Licensing
 - b. Home Visiting Grant
5. Department of Social Services
 - a. Care 4 Kids
 - b. Contract with United Way Connecticut for Child Development 211 Infoline
 - c. Children’s Trust Fund

Administrative Purposes Only

“An agency assigned to a department for administrative purposes only shall:

- (1) Exercise any quasi-judicial, rule-making or regulatory authority, licensing and policy-making functions which it may have independent of such department and without approval or control of the department;
- (2) prepare its budget, if any, and submit its budgetary requests through the department; and
- (3) hire its own personnel or enter into contracts, if authorized by law, or if the general assembly provides or authorizes the expenditure of funds therefor.”

CT General Statute – Section 4-38f

The Office of Early Childhood will also subsume the positions currently devoted to early childhood programs and services in DDS, DPH, DSS, SDE and BOR. The programs to be moved from each agency are outlined in Figure 9.

The Early Childhood Planning Team recognizes that a few other early childhood related programs will remain in other agencies with this plan, for example the State Department of Education's Family Resource Centers, or the Department of Children and Families' contracts with Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) and Child FIRST. It is recommended that these programs remain in their current agencies until further planning and assessment can be made as to the best administrative oversight arrangement. In addition, it is generally agreed that, developmentally, the early childhood period continues until age eight or third grade. An important responsibility of the new agency will be to ensure tight collaboration with early primary education policies and programs at the State Department of Education, and with agencies that provide services that span the age continuum such as the Departments of Children and Families, Social Services and Public Health. This will be one of the foci of the new Cabinet which will include the Commissioners of these agencies as members.

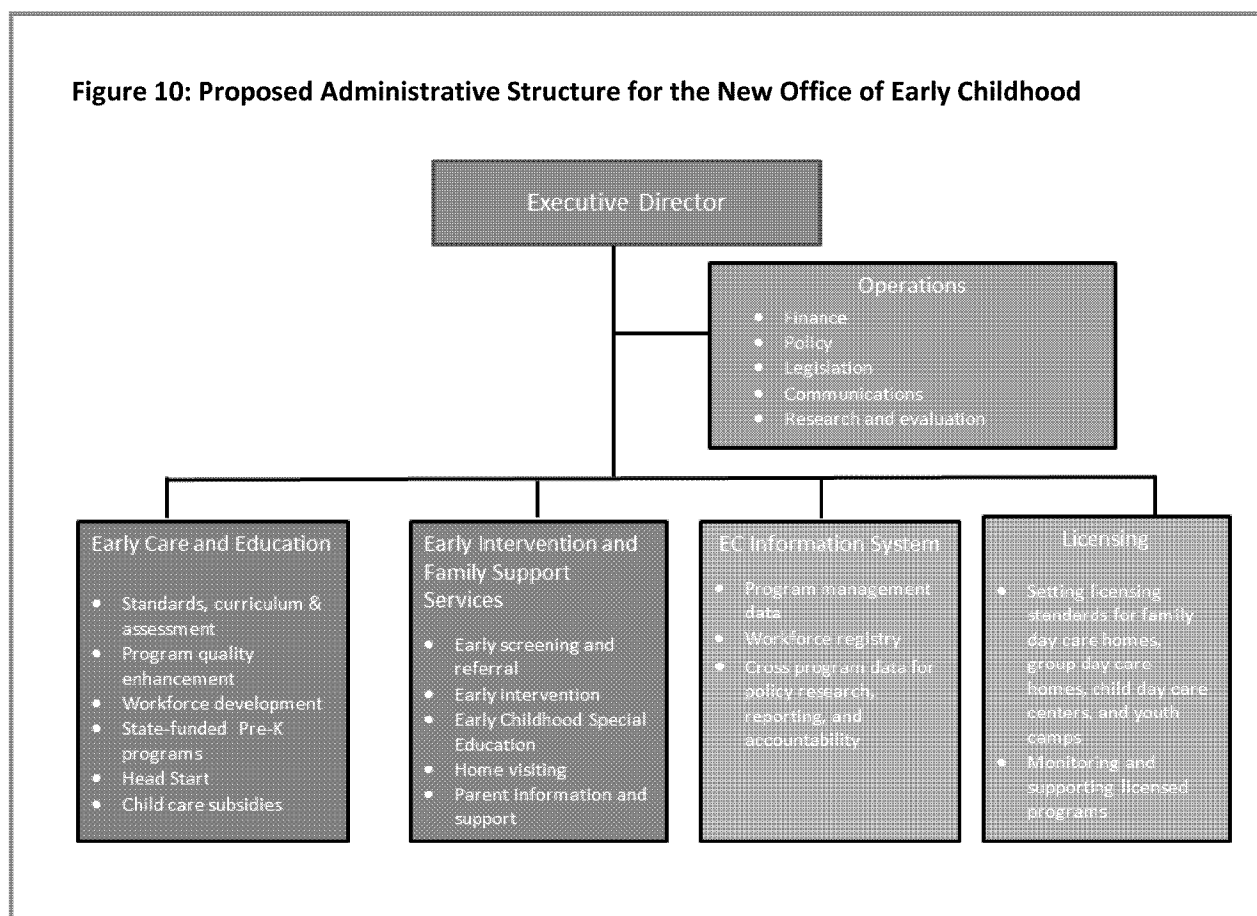
B. A Proposed Administrative Structure

The proposed Office of Early Childhood will be overseen by an Executive Director to be appointed by the Governor. The Executive Director will serve as the head of the agency, in accordance with provisions of Connecticut General Statute sections 4-5 to 4-8, inclusive, with all of the authority and responsibilities of Commissioners and other agency heads. In addition the Governor's budget calls for three new full-time employees. Key activities of the proposed new agency include providing unified data, policy, and budgetary oversight of early childhood activities. With this in mind Figure 10 depicts a proposed organizational structure for the Office.

Figure 9: Early Childhood Activities to be moved from other Connecticut State Agencies

Board of Regents	
Connecticut Charts-a-Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development for ECE staff Career counseling for ECE staff Scholarship assistance Training Program in Child Development Approval system for trainers Support for program administrators to obtain CT Directors' Credential
CCAC Registry for ECE Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel database of early childhood professionals Verification of Head Teacher status for DPH licensing Candidacy calculator for NAEYC accreditation
CCAC Accreditation Facilitation Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assistance and support for early childhood programs seeking NAEYC Accreditation
Department of Developmental Services	
Connecticut Birth-to-Three System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services to meet the health-related and developmental needs of infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities
Department of Public Health	
Child Day Care Licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Based Regulation (CBR) Section is responsible for the administration of the child day care and youth camp licensing programs at the Department of Public Health Assures that family day care homes, group day care homes and child day care centers operate at or above the required standards established by state statutes and regulations
Home Visitation (MIECHV Grant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes several service strategies embedded in a comprehensive, high-quality early childhood system Promotes maternal, infant, and early childhood health & development; relies on the best available research evidence to inform practice
Department of Social Services	
Nurturing Families Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides screening and assessment, group support and intensive home visiting for new parents who are at high risk for child abuse and neglect
Help Me Grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links child health providers, parents and service providers with existing community-based resources and services through a toll-free telephone number and care coordination
Care 4 Kids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make child care affordable for low-to-moderate income families in CT Contracted services provided through United Way 211 Child Care Infoline
State Department of Education	
Bureau of Teaching and Learning Early Childhood Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of the School Readiness Program, Child Development Centers, and the state Head Start grant Early childhood workforce development Early care and education program support
Early Childhood Special Education (IDEA Part B – 619)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assures compliance with Special Education and related services as required by federal and state law Ensures that young children with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate public education in accordance with their individual needs Early childhood special education as defined by IDEA is for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children with disabilities who require special education

Figure 10: Proposed Administrative Structure for the New Office of Early Childhood



C. The Early Childhood Cabinet

The current Early Childhood Education Cabinet is proposed to be reorganized and named the Early Childhood Cabinet. In its new capacity, the primary purpose of the Early Childhood Cabinet, which will meet quarterly, will be threefold: (1) to make policy recommendations for an effective and cohesive early childhood system, and (2) to provide close coordination with other state agencies, and (3) to outline annual action plans and strategic reports to the Governor. The Executive Director of the Office of Early Childhood will co-chair the Cabinet. The second co-chair will rotate among the membership which will primarily include the Commissioners of the Departments of Education, Social Services, Public Health, and Developmental Services, the President of Board of Regents, and the Director of the proposed Institute (see below). In addition, the Cabinet will continue to serve as the federally required State Advisory Council and will thus include a members representing of local educational agencies, local providers of early childhood education services, Head Start, and the director of the Head Start Collaboration.

As the new Office of Early Childhood is configured it will be essential to consider the very important work that has been done by the working groups of the current Early Childhood Education Cabinet. In some cases this work will now be able to be carried on within the new agency, and the working group may play an advisory role. Decisions about how this new governance structure impacts the work and the on-going role of each of the working groups will be made on a case by case basis.

D. Connecticut Early Childhood Innovation and Investment Institute (CECI³)

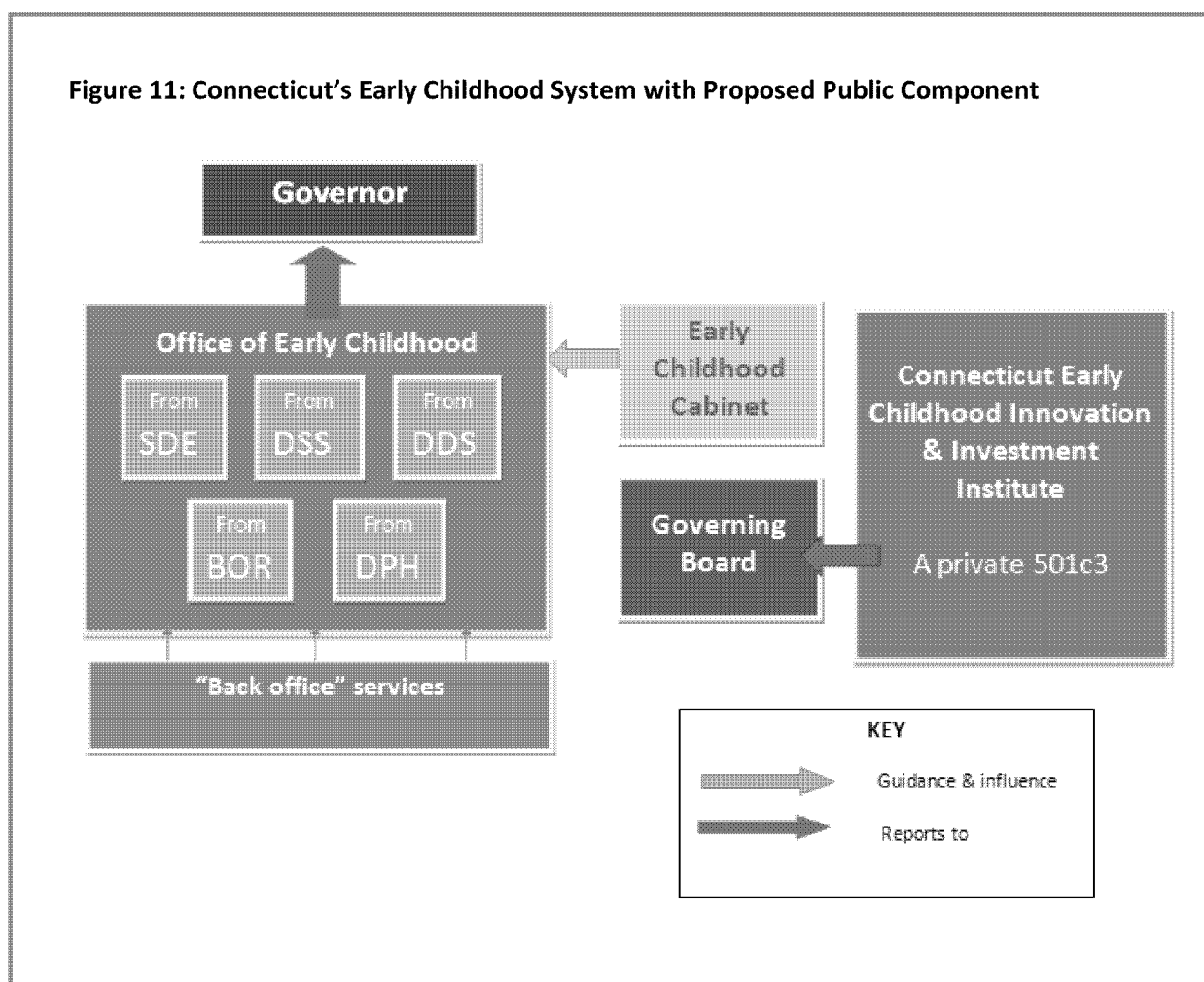
As it shaped its plan for a Connecticut Early Childhood governance system, the Early Childhood Planning Team knew that it had the opportunity to truly revolutionize the way Connecticut approaches early childhood. Acknowledging that preparing young children for success in school is of interest to both the state and private sector, the Planning Team proposes the development of a private institute that will work hand-in-hand with the Office of Early Childhood. Such a partnership will facilitate public-private collaborations and investments. After all, some tasks are better performed by a state agency, others by private entities.

Early Childhood Cabinet Members

Executive Director of the Office of Early Childhood
 Commissioner of Education
 Commissioner of Social Services
 President of Board of Regents
 Commissioner of Public Health
 Commissioner of Developmental Services
 Commissioner of Children and Families
 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management
 Project Director of Head Start Collaboration
 Parent of School Readiness child
 Local early childhood education provider
 Representative of a LEA in an Alliance district
 Parent of child attending elementary school in an Alliance district
 Member of the House of Representatives
 Member of the Senate
 Representative of Head Start Association
 Representative of the business or philanthropic community

The proposed Connecticut Early Childhood Innovation and Investment Institute (CECI³) will focus key efforts on launching innovation in Connecticut's early childhood sphere, policy research and development, advocacy, public relations and fund raising and grant procurement. In addition, the CECI³ will oversee and support Local Early Childhood Councils, which in turn will focus on planning and coordination of programs; developing and maintaining inventories of local programs and services; and coordinating with Child Development Infoline and Help Me Grow to provide information and referral services to families.

To solidify this public-private partnership, the Planning Office proposes a Governing Board to oversee the Institute, with the goal of directly involving researchers, business leaders, and philanthropy. The Executive Director of the Office of Early Childhood should be a member of this Board in order to insure coordination between the public and private components of the system. The relationship between the Office of Early Childhood, the new Institute, and its board are shown in Figure 11.



E. Other Partners

In addition to the Connecticut Early Childhood Innovation and Investment Institute, the Office of Early Childhood will continue to rely on the support and counsel of a variety of partners, including; United Way of Connecticut, Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC), Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs), and the State Education Resource Center (SERC).

As a long-standing early childhood resource in the state, the United Way of Connecticut will continue to partner with the OEC to provide services through its Child Development Infoline, Care 4 Kids, and 2-1-1 Child Care. 2-1-1 will continue to house a comprehensive registry of programs, information for families regarding child care, and assistance to child care providers.

SERC, which is largely funded by the State Department of Education, will continue to provide professional development and information dissemination in the latest research and best practices to early childhood educators, service providers and families throughout the state, as well as job-embedded technical assistance and training within schools and programs. By the same token RESCs will continue to provide cost-efficient, cooperative early childhood initiatives to support young children and their families through curriculum development and assessment, professional development, special education services, among other services. On the policy front, CAEYC and its local chapters will continue to provide training for early childhood professionals and to promote early childhood competencies through support and advocacy.

V. Planning for Implementation

Legislative approval is required to create the Office of Early Childhood. According to Governor Malloy's proposal, the OEC will come into existence July 1, 2013 should the legislation pass. In the event of its passage, implementation will occur in two phases between July 1, 2013 and July 1, 2014. The Office of Early Childhood Planning is currently working with teams from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the Office of Labor Relations (OLR), and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to ensure a smooth transition should the legislature vote to create the Office of Early Childhood.

Numerous state employees are devoted to planning for this transition with the clear understanding that the OEC may not become a reality. As arduous as this planning process is, the teams that have come together recognize that it is better to prepare for something that may never come into existence than for July 1, 2013 to arrive without a plan to maintain services for children and families.

The primary goal of the initial part of the implementation process is to ensure that there will be neither any disruption of services for children and families, nor delayed payment for providers and contractors. As such, the current grants and contracts held by the programs to move during Phase I will be maintained in their extant form upon initial implementation of the Office of Early Childhood. Individual Memoranda of Agreement between the Office of Early Childhood and the Board of Regents, the State Department of Education, and the Department of Social Services will be created to allow those originating agencies to maintain existing contracts until the Office of Early Childhood has transitioned fully into the new contract management system.

The *ultimate* goal of the implementation of the OEC is to establish a new agency culture focused on the collective positive impact of early childhood programs on young children and families in Connecticut. Implementing the OEC will require thoughtful planning and intentional execution. Teams from OPM, OLR, and DAS, as well as BUILD consultants made possible by the generous support of the CT Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, have given invaluable guidance to ensure a successful implementation of the OEC. That guidance is the basis of the implementation planning process described below.

A. A Two-phased Approach

The implementation of the Office of Early Childhood will occur in two phases spanning one full year, beginning July 1, 2013 and ending July 1, 2014. The Planning Team, in consultation with experts from BUILD who have created early childhood governance structures in other states, determined that a phased implementation process would be best for Connecticut. Consolidating all programs in one fell swoop would be overwhelming and could potentially undermine the goal of creating an efficient and effective early childhood system; ***however, extending the implementation period over a number of years would inhibit the development of a new agency culture that is crucial to successful system change.*** Staggering the OEC's implementation in two phases over one year enables the new agency to account for the complexity of consolidating multiple programs without weakening the intended impact of such a move (see Appendix D).

Two Phases of Implementation

Implementation Phase	Agency	Programs to be Transferred to OEC
Phase I- To begin July 2013 Includes transfer of approximately 30 FTEs	SDE	School Readiness; Child Development Centers; Head Start Collaboration
	DSS	Care 4 Kids and the contract with United Way for 211 Childcare Infoline
	BOR	Connecticut Charts-A-Course
Phase II- To be completed no later than July 2014 Includes transfer of additional 65 FTEs	SDE	Early Childhood Special Education
	DDS	Birth to 3
	DSS	Childrens' Trust fund
	DPH	Child Day Care Licensing, Home Visiting (MIECHV Grant)

B. Location

The Office of Early Childhood Planning is working with DAS and OPM to identify a state-owned property to accommodate the nearly 100 state employees who will move into the proposed OEC by the Phase II in July of 2014.

C. Personnel

The seamless and thoughtful transfer of personnel into the Office of Early Childhood is critical to its success. The implementation process must be mindful of the stress state employees may feel in the face of change and the relative uncertainty of a new agency. It must value the contributions state employees made in their originating agencies while inspiring them to recognize the opportunity of being part of a new system committed to collective improvement and innovation on behalf of young children. Capacity building and the creation of a new agency culture will be key foci during the implementation process. Although the full implementation of the OEC will take an entire year, employees scheduled to move during Phases I and II will take part in capacity- and culture-building activities together commencing during Phase I.

The following is a list of the personnel related issues addressed in this process:

Human Resource Issues	Projected Responses
Bargaining Units, Classified State Employees, and Vacancies	State employees will remain in their respective bargaining units upon transfer to the OEC.
	Current state employees in BOR will be brought into the executive branch state system. OLR and DAS have experience with similar moves in the past and are working to ensure a smooth transition for BOR employees.
	DAS will evaluate current vacancies (and those subsequently created by retirement or departures from state government) in programs that will be moving to the OEC for their potential to be reclassified to serve the new functions of the OEC.
Retirement and Benefits	The retirement and benefit packages of state employees transferred from one executive branch agency to another will not be affected by the move to the OEC, which will be another executive branch agency.
	Retirement and benefit packages for state employees in the BOR differ from those in the executive branch; however, those state employees moving from the BOR to the OEC with more than five years of state employment will be able to maintain their current retirement and benefit packages if they so choose.
Four New FTE's	The Governor will appoint the agency head of the OEC (CSG sections 4-5 to 4-8, inclusive).
	The remaining three new positions will be posted and filled in accordance with state hiring procedures.

D. Fiscal

Current grants and contracts held by the programs to move during Phase I will be maintained in their extant form during the initial implementation of the OEC. ***This is to ensure that there will be neither any disruption of services for children and families nor delayed payment for providers and contractors.***

Part of the Governor's proposal for the Office of Early Childhood is to have it be a part of a newly established contract management system with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. That agency is widely recognized as having an effective contract management system. By Phase II of the Office of Early Childhood implementation process all early childhood contracts in the new agency will be maintained and issued through the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' contract management system. During Phase I, however, individual Memoranda of Agreement between the Office of Early Childhood and the Board of Regents, the State Department of Education, and the Department of Social Services will be created to allow those originating agencies to maintain existing contracts until the Office of Early Childhood has transitioned fully into the new contract management system. This process is to ensure that services and payment are not disrupted.

E. Data and Information Technology (IT)

Connecticut does not have a centralized mechanism for collecting and managing early childhood data, commonly known as an Early Childhood Information System (ECIS). To the contrary, early childhood data is dispersed across at least six agencies and more than 25 associated databases, making data sharing incredibly challenging. Without an ECIS the state cannot make informed and effective early childhood policy, costing the state unnecessarily and hindering its ability to turn the curve in the lives of young children and their families. Young children receive multiple services, including early care and education, health, mental health, and home visiting from the state. Yet the state has no coordinated way to identify which children are receiving services and, as a result, no way to assess whether the services are making a positive difference in their lives. Complete and accurate data should be collected, linked to, and coordinated with the K-12 data system, in particular, so that quality assessments and longitudinal analyses of early care and education programs can be performed and student progress can be monitored.

One of the primary reasons for establishing the OEC is its ability to unify the early childhood data that is currently scattered across agencies, but this will not happen instantaneously with the consolidation of early childhood programs. Extensive data mapping and sophisticated programming is required to create an ECIS out of Connecticut's currently lacking early childhood data infrastructure. Fortuitously, the legislature made technology bond funds available through OPM for such an endeavor during the 2012 legislative session. The Office of Early Childhood Planning, in concert with SDE's Bureau of Information Technology, is approaching the final stage of securing technology bond funds to develop an ECIS.

The following IT considerations are being made for the OEC in the interim:

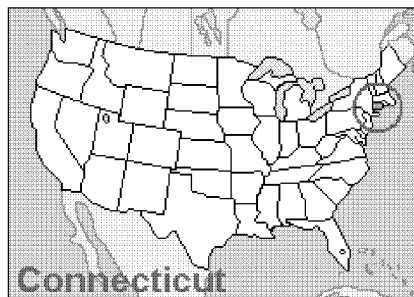
Implementation Phase	Agency	Technology Concerns to be Addressed
Phase I Technology Concerns	SDE	Because the OEC will be assigned to SDE for administrative purposes only, which includes IT support, the data and IT transitions should be minimal during the initial implementation period.
	DSS	The United Way currently manages the vast majority of the data related to Care 4 Kids, therefore the data and IT transitions should also be minimal during the initial implementation period.
	BOR	CT Charts-A-Course (CCAC) maintains the workforce registry, the main data base for the state's early childhood workforce. An outside contractor currently maintains CCAC's data system. In accordance with CSG section 4-38d(d), the OEC may maintain that contract during the initial implementation period or for whatever duration deemed appropriate.
Phase II Technology Concerns	DDS	Birth-to-Three has one of the most robust and functional data systems among Connecticut's early childhood programs. By design, the implementation process allows for one year to plan to integrate this data system into the OEC.
	DPH	Most of DPH's data requiring integration relates to home visiting because child care licensing's data is primarily housed at BEST as part of its centralized e-licensing system. As of print, the home visiting programs funded by MIECHV have yet to begin data collection from grantees so there is an opportunity to plan for data integration near the outset. Here, too, the OEC will have one year to plan to integrate DPH's data into the OEC.

VI. Conclusion

As a result of the planning process, the Planning Team recommends that the new Office of Early Childhood focus on the following priorities in the first two years:

- Build a child- and family-centered agency culture committed to excellence, innovation, and accountability
- Create outcomes-driven policy and programs
- Develop a comprehensive early childhood assessment system
- Align quality standards across all early care and education settings, including home-based programs

A Plan the puts Connecticut on the Map



The Planning Office also recommends that the new Office of Early Childhood Planning create conditions to promote collective impact:

Common Agenda: shared understanding of the problem and the ultimate goal

Shared Measurement Systems: collective approach to measuring results and progress

Mutually Reinforcing Activities: coordination of goal-oriented activities across expertise and focus area

Continuous Communication: open, frequent and regular dialog rooted in a common language

Backbone Support Organization: collaboration with another entity whose sole purpose is to coordinate efforts and leverage impact (the Early Childhood Innovation and Investment Institute)

The move to create a free-standing Office of Early Childhood is bold. Only three other states (Massachusetts, Washington, and Georgia) have consolidated their early childhood services in one state agency devoted to early childhood. Moreover, the Connecticut model is more comprehensive than that of any other state including a fuller range of the services that children and families require starting at birth.

“Large-scale social change requires broad cross-sector coordination, yet the social sector remains focused on the isolated intervention of individual organizations. Substantially greater progress could be made in alleviating many of our most serious and complex social problems if nonprofits, governments, businesses, and the public were brought together around a common agenda to create collective impact.”

“Collective Impact,” John Kania & Mark Kramer, Stanford Social Innovation Review.

Bold it may be, but Connecticut’s move toward creation of an Office of Early Childhood is good policy. A unified vision for early childhood leads to better outcomes for children, improved communication with parents, higher standards for providers, and more effective decision making by policymakers.

EARLY LITERACY LEGISLATION



September, 2013

Status Report - Revised

This report provides information about reading initiatives in The Education Reform Act of 2012, specifically P.A. 12-116 and Substitute Senate Bill No. 1097 passed during the 2013 legislative session.

Early Literacy Pilot Study

OVERVIEW

The Early Literacy Pilot Study (assessment pilot), established July 2011, studied the impact of using an alternative reading assessment system. Participating schools used Wireless Generation (now Amplify), mCLASS:Reading 3D as the alternative assessment system, which has purportedly reduced the achievement gap in several states with its teacher-friendly model and research-based intervention strategies. The primary purpose of the assessment pilot was to compare the results of the alternative assessment system to the current reading assessment, the Developmental Reading Assessment Second Edition (DRA2), and to ensure best practice in reading assessment and intervention.

The Early Literacy Pilot studied the impact of using an alternative reading assessment system and mentor support for teachers to differentiate reading instruction. The project also included a parent engagement component.

The assessment pilot studied the impact of mentor support for teachers to differentiate reading instruction and included a parent engagement component. The Commission on Children developed modules to teach parents in all participating schools about the importance of reading.

The Grossman Foundation funded the first year of the assessment pilot during the 2011-2012 school year. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) was authorized to extend the assessment pilot for an additional year, and provided the majority of the funding during the 2012-2013 school year.

<u>EARLY LITERACY PILOT STUDY CONTACTS</u>		<u>TIMELINE</u>	
PROGRAM MANAGER	ELLEN COHN/JOANNE WHITE CSDE	START DATE	JULY 2011
PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER	MARGIE GILLIS LITERACY HOW	END DATE	UPDATE: ADDITIONAL FUNDING IS AVAILABLE FOR THE 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR
PROGRAM EVALUATOR	MIKE COYNE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT		

Participating Districts/Schools

Through a competitive grant process, three schools from five different PSDs were selected to participate in the two-year study. The study involved students and teachers in grades K-3, inclusive. During the first year (2011-2012), teachers in ten schools received iTouches or iPads equipped with the alternative assessment and received support in the administration of the tool. The tool included both skills based tests (i.e., Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills - DIBELS NEXT®) and Text, Reading and Comprehension (TRC) diagnostics. During the second year (2012-2013), five schools received the equipment and technical support. The teachers and administrators in these schools also received professional development. Parents with children in the K-3 classes were offered training in how children learn to read and how they can collaborate at home and at school in early reading success.

Teachers in five of the fifteen schools (i.e., one from each selected district) received additional support in the form of a *Literacy How* mentor. Each mentor spent two days each week in the school to guide teachers in using data to inform instruction and differentiate classroom instruction using scientific evidence-based methods and techniques. Schools using the alternative assessment system were exempt from using the current reading assessment instrument, the DRA2.

DISTRICTS	YEAR 1 SCHOOLS (GROSSMAN GRANT)			YEAR 2 SCHOOLS		
	CONTROL	ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM	ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM + MENTORING SUPPORT	ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (GROSSMAN GRANT)	ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CSDE)	ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM + MENTORING SUPPORT (CSDE)
ANSONIA (Alternate)				PRENDERGAST		
BRISTOL	MT. VIEW	STAFFORD	HUBBELL	MT. VIEW		HUBBELL
NAUGATUCK	SALEM	ANDREW AVENUE	WESTERN	SALEM	ANDREW AVENUE	WESTERN
NORWALK	JEFFERSON MAGNET	FOX RUN	MARVIN	JEFFERSON MAGNET	FOX RUN	MARVIN
WATERBURY	CARRINGTON	BUNKER HILL	CHASE	CARRINGTON	BUNKER HILL	CHASE*
WEST HAVEN	SAVIN ROCK	WASHINGTON	SETH HALEY	SAVIN ROCK	WASHINGTON	SETH HALEY

*Modified mentor support for 2012-2013

Update: The following schools will participate during the 2013-2014 school year.

DISTRICTS	<u>YEAR 3 SCHOOLS</u>			
ANSONIA	PRENDERGAST	MEAD		
BRISTOL	HUBBELL	MT. VIEW		
NAUGATUCK	ANDREW AVENUE	SALEM	WESTERN	
NORWALK	JEFFERSON MAGNET	FOX RUN	MARVIN	
WATERBURY	CARRINGTON	BUNKER HILL	CHASE	SPRAGUE

Key CSDE Action Items - Completed

- ✓ Developed and expedited Personal Service Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement for Year 2 implementation
- ✓ Provided technical assistance to districts regarding assessment challenges (i.e., cut scores, ELL exit criteria, CSDE reporting requirements) during site visits and conference calls
- ✓ Received CSDE project updates and evaluation reports in a timely manner
- ✓ Hosted discussion forum for CSDE, Amplify, and *Literacy How* to inform approval/development of new K-3 reading assessments for local school boards – pursuant to Section 12 in Substitute Senate Bill No. 1097 [Subsection (a) of section 10-14t of the CGS]

Next Steps

- ✓ Receive and discuss preliminary Year 2 evaluation report – **Update:** The meeting is August 27, 2013.

Open Issues

- ✓ **Cut Scores**
District leaders and teachers have expressed concerns about the performance level cut scores for the TRC component of the alternative assessment.
As specified in Section 10-265g (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) and outlined in *Developmental Reading Assessment Second Edition: Questions & Answers*, schools in PSDs are required to assess students in reading in Grades K-3 and report results to the CSDE. Similarly, schools using the alternative assessment in lieu of the DRA2 must:

- o identify students who are reading well below grade-level expectations and at risk of not being able to read and comprehend grade-level material independently by the end of each grade (kindergarten through Grade 3);
- o complete an Individual Reading Plan (IRP) for students who are "substantially deficient" based on their TRC performance that outlines additional instructional support and monitors progress; and
- o require students in Grades K-3 who are determined to be substantially deficient in reading based on the spring/end-of-year administration of the TRC to attend summer school.

The performance levels in the table below were provided to districts during Year 2 of the assessment pilot. The levels reflect reading behaviors expected for a particular grade as delineated by Common Core Standards. The revised performance levels resulted in a higher percentage of students identified for targeted support during the school year. Additionally, there was an increase in the percentage of students identified as substantially deficient in reading based on the spring/end-of-year administration of TRC. District leaders expressed concerns about funding summer school for the increased percentage of students determined to be substantially deficient.

TRC PERFORMANCE LEVELS						
	FALL		WINTER		SPRING	
Grade Placement	Substantially Deficient	Proficient and Above	Substantially Deficient	Proficient and Above	Substantially Deficient	Proficient and Above
Kindergarten	PC or lower	RB and above	B or lower	C and above	C or lower	D and above
Grade 1	C or lower	D and above	F or lower	G and above	I or lower	J and above
Grade 2	I or lower	J and above	K or lower	L and above	L or lower	M and above
Grade 3	L or lower	M and above	N or lower	O and above	O or lower	P and above

✓ English Language Learner (ELL) Program Exit Criteria

To be eligible to exit an ELL program or discontinue receiving ELL support, a student in kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 must meet the following year-end proficiency levels on the DRA2 or TRC. In addition to the DRA2 or TRC, students in ELL programs must also achieve a level 4 or 5 on the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) Links.

YEAR-END PROFICIENCY LEVELS FOR ELL PROGRAM EXIT		
GRADE	DRA2 LEVEL	TRC LEVEL
K	4	D
1	18	K
2	28 (non-fiction text)	N (non-fiction text)

ELL teachers and program directors expressed concerns about the required proficiency levels, and that it may be for some ELLs to reach such levels of proficiency.

Connecticut K-3 Literacy Initiative

OVERVIEW

Pursuant to section 10-14u of the CGS, an intensive reading intervention strategy was developed for use by schools selected to participate in the intensive reading instruction program. The five elementary schools selected to participate were (1) located in an educational reform district, as defined in section 10-262u, (2) participating in the commissioner's network of schools, pursuant to section 10-223h, or (3) among the lowest five per cent of elementary schools in school subject performance indices for reading and mathematics, as defined in section 10-223e. The CSDE collaborated with the Center for Behavioral Education and Research (CBER) in the Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut to develop and implement the intensive reading intervention strategy in the five schools.

The goals for the intensive reading intervention, now called the K-3 Literacy Initiative (CK3LI) included:

- ✓ identifying students at risk for reading difficulties and providing intensive small group intervention;
- ✓ working with each of the schools and their central office to develop a comprehensive school-wide reading plan with a tiered system of support;
- ✓ developing a comprehensive literacy assessment implementation plan (assessment system for screening, benchmarking, and progress monitoring) that is highly predictive of reading outcomes; and
- ✓ developing a supplemental intervention implementation plan for each school.

At the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, all 1224 K-3 students across the five CK3LI schools were assessed; 45% of all students were scheduled to receive small group intervention.

The comprehensive literacy intervention implementation plan for the five schools included:

- ✓ assembling a highly experienced team of five full-time literacy coaches and 20 full-time reading interventionists
- ✓ selecting an assessment system for screening, benchmarking, and progress monitoring that is highly predictive of reading outcomes; and
- ✓ screening all 1224 students in K-3 and identifying students to receive small group intervention.

This first year of CK3LI required a focused effort on implementing the comprehensive literacy assessment plan and the supplemental intervention plan. Thus, a limited amount of time was devoted to developing a core classroom literacy implementation plan for each school, an integral part of CK3LI. The core classroom literacy component will be revisited during the second year of the project.

Update: In addition to focusing on the comprehensive literacy assessment and supplemental intervention plans, the second year of CK3LI will focus on the core classroom literacy implementation plan.

Participating Schools

The selection process entailed an application screening and an extensive interview with school and district personnel to determine level of commitment, readiness, and ability to meet the requirements of the CK3LI. Schools selected to participate demonstrated:

- ✓ strong commitment to improve reading outcomes as a top school-wide priority;
- ✓ willingness to implement all elements of a comprehensive school-wide reading improvement model;
- ✓ desire to build the systems and internal capacity to sustain effective reading practices over time; and
- ✓ district level support for full participation.

CK3LI SCHOOLS	
<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>
EAST HARTFORD	ANNIE E. NORRIS
HARTFORD	LATINO STUDIES ACADEMY AT BURNS
MERIDEN	JOHN BARRY
NEW HAVEN	TRUMAN
WINDHAM	WINDHAM CENTER

Update: The following schools will participate during the 2013-2014 school year.

CK3LI SCHOOLS	
<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>
EAST HARTFORD	ANNIE E. NORRIS
	JOHN A. LANGFORD
HARTFORD	LATINO STUDIES ACADEMY AT BURNS
MERIDEN	JOHN BARRY
NEW HAVEN	TRUMAN
WINDHAM	WINDHAM CENTER

CK3LI CONTACTS	
PROGRAM MANAGER	ELLEN COHN / JOANNE WHITE CSDE
PROGRAM COORDINATION	MIKE COYNE/GEORGE SUGAI, CBER
PROGRAM EVALUATOR	MIKE COYNE/GEORGE SUGAI, CBER


Key CSDE Action Items – Completed

- ✓ Developed and expedited Personal Service Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement for Year 1 implementation
- ✓ Established and coordinated school selection process
- ✓ Provided technical assistance to districts regarding implementation issues during site visits
- ✓ Received CSDE project updates and evaluation reports in a timely manner


Next Steps

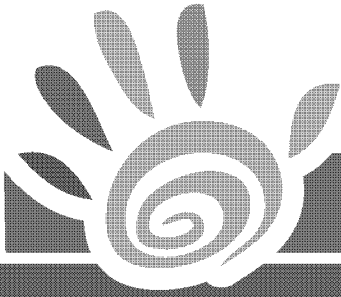
- ✓ Receive and discuss preliminary Year 1 evaluation report

MIECHV Competitive Grant

 HRSA Health Resources and Services Administration Data Warehouse						
Active Grants for HRSA Program(s): Affordable Care Act - Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (D89)						
Data is current as of Oct 09, 2013						
State	County	Grantee Class	Grantee	Grant Number	Program Director	Financial Assistance
Connecticut	Hartford County	U.S. Government Entity	PUBLIC HEALTH, CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF 410 Capitol Ave HARTFORD, CT 06106-1367	D89MC23541	Rosa Biaggi 860-509-8074 x7773	\$8,910,423

MIECHV Formula Grant

 HRSA Health Resources and Services Administration Data Warehouse						
Active Grants for HRSA Program(s): Affordable Care Act - Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (D89)						
Data is current as of Oct 09, 2013						
State	County	Grantee Class	Grantee	Grant Number	Program Director	Financial Assistance
Connecticut	Hartford County	U.S. Government Entity	PUBLIC HEALTH, CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF 410 Capitol Ave HARTFORD, CT 06106-1367	X02MC26310	Rosa M Biaggi 860-509-7773 Send email	\$1,026,087



What is SCHOOL READINESS in Connecticut?

"School readiness includes the readiness of the individual child, the school's readiness for children, and the ability of the family and community to support optimal early child development. It is the responsibility of schools to be ready for all children at all levels of readiness."

— American Academy of Pediatrics

Early learning and growth is an ongoing process that begins before birth and is influenced by many factors. Often, attention is given to children's skills at transition points, such as kindergarten entry, however, no one set of skills at any given time can determine school readiness. When families, communities and schools work together to support children's early learning and growth:

- Families have the resources and knowledge to support their children's health and development beginning before birth.
- Communities support families, schools, early caregivers and children in a coordinated way.
- Schools and early learning settings support all children, no matter their background or skill level.
- Children are eager and ready to learn and grow.

SCHOOL READINESS:
It's not just a program.

Families support school readiness by:

- Helping their children grow and develop.
- Gaining knowledge and accessing necessary community supports.
- Partnering with schools, the community and other caregivers to support children's growth.
- Advocating in their children's best interests.
- Supporting their children's lifelong learning
- Contributing to their children's health, safety and stability.

Schools and early learning environments support school readiness by:

- Building relationships among everyone interested in supporting families' and children's growth and learning.
- Providing a safe, nurturing, culturally open environment.
- Having strong, positive relationships with children and families.
- Viewing children's learning and growth as a process and not as a point in time.
- Supporting children's physical, emotional and intellectual growth.
- Welcoming all families and children.
- Using ways of teaching and assessment that meet all developmental needs and learning styles.
- Supporting transitions between programs and grades.

Communities support school readiness by:

- Coordinating the delivery of resources to help families meet basic needs, manage stress, learn about parenting and child development, and create social connections.
- Generating responsive, effective resources.
- Supporting community partnerships.
- Respecting and acknowledging diversity.

When families, communities and schools work together to support school readiness, children will:

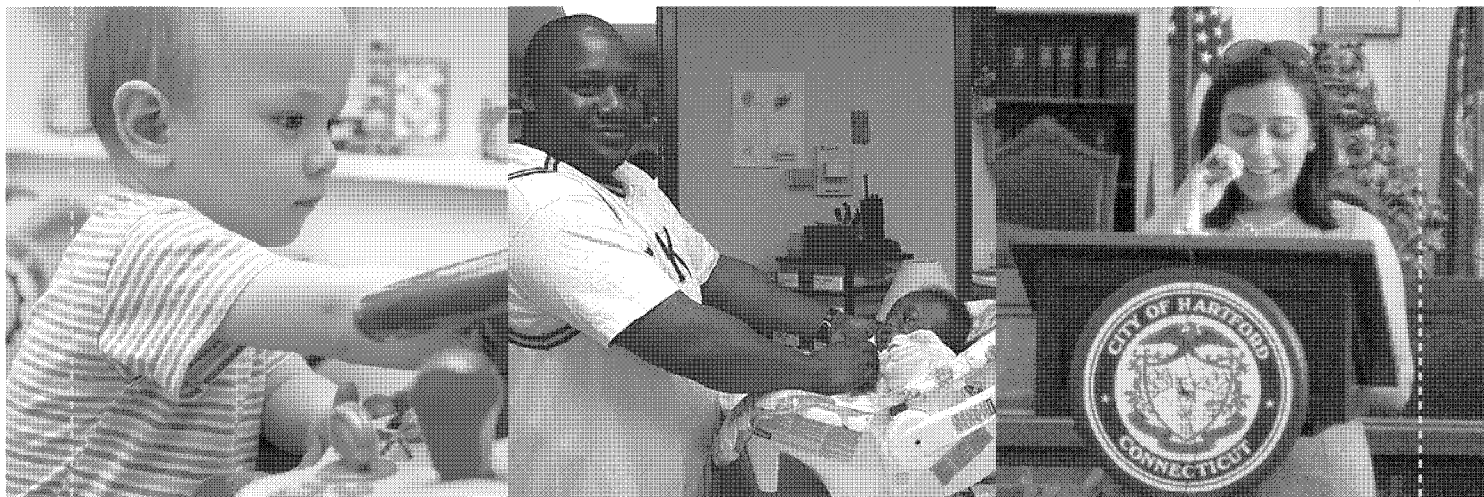
- Communicate their thoughts and feelings through words and actions.
- Be attentive to their surroundings.
- Learn by exploring.
- Show curiosity.
- Have positive relationships with children and adults and learn how to make friends.
- Play, including pretend and interactive games.
- Feel safe and valued.
- Show respect for self and others.
- Solve problems and resolve conflicts.
- Make progress across *all* areas (physical health and motor development; language and literacy; social and emotional development; creative arts expression; cognitive and general knowledge, including science, mathematics and social studies; and approaches to learning).*

For a list of references and contributors to this document, go to www.ctearlychildhood.org.

* These domains will be addressed by Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards draft expected in late 2013.



ENGAGE PARENTS AS PARTNERS AND LEADERS A GUIDE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROVIDERS...



“The most honest moments I’ve had with parents have been in the hallway outside the classroom after they’ve dropped off their child, that’s when they open up and tell me what’s really going on, not when they are on the other side of the desk in my office.”

Head Start Family Service Provider

Dear Early Childhood Provider,

We appreciate and applaud how much you dedicate every day to your work with children and families. We applaud your efforts and celebrate your accomplishments.

The CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet’s Family Involvement/Home Visiting workgroup in partnership with the Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative, interviewed early childhood providers like you to learn your hopes and needs to partner with parents for the best child outcomes.

As Connecticut moves forward with great momentum under the leadership of the new Office of Early Childhood, it is exciting to bring forth and highlight your successes and needs. Many providers shared extensively their goals for children and for the field, and articulated the tools desired for family partnerships. Take a moment and read through the findings and the research on parent engagement. This is surely a positive trend in family engagement that the early childhood providers and parents make real.

This is one step forward to make the parent engagement successful, recognizing your commitment to the family as well as the many responsibilities you have as strong early childhood providers. Enjoy!

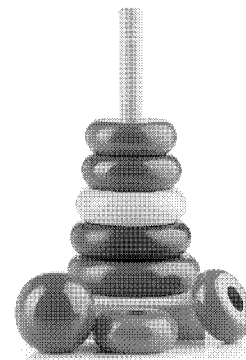
Thank you.



Elaine Zimmerman
Chair, Family Involvement/Home Visitation Workgroup
CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet



Elena Trueworthy
Director
Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative





CT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CABINET

WWW.CTEARLYCHILDHOOD.ORG

The Early Childhood Education Cabinet was reformed in January 2010 and designated by Governor M. Jodi Rell to be the State Advisory Council specified in the Head Start Act of 2007. The purpose of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet is to develop a high-quality, comprehensive system of early childhood education among the wide array of early childhood programs in the state (including Head Start, child care and School Readiness). The Early Childhood Education Cabinet plays a key role in advancing the integration of services for young children and families.

The Cabinet works within these priority areas through intensive workgroup activity: Quality Data Systems, Early Learning Standards, Family Involvement/Home Visitation, Professional Development/Workforce, Health Promotions, Public/Private Partnerships, and QRIS

Family Involvement and Home Visitation Workgroup

The Cabinet's Family Involvement and Home Visitation Workgroup seeks to systemically embed family engagement and parent leadership in the early childhood system. Strategies have included working with professionals on how to maximize parents as partners and central assets for improved child outcomes in health, safety and learning. Professionals include early care providers, health care providers, school teachers and community leaders. Additionally, the Workgroup has prepared a continuum of family engagement and leadership opportunities for parents and other caregivers, created a fatherhood audit for agencies to see how they might maximize father engagement, and developed a home visitation system for new families.



HARTFORD AREA CHILD CARE COLLABORATIVE

WWW.HACCC.INFO

(860) 241-0411

The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative works in partnership with a diverse group of cross-sector providers, agencies, state departments, institutions of higher education, students, parents, home visiting programs, and others to ensure children and families have access to high quality early learning experiences. Created in 1987, the Collaborative seeks to continually assess the early childhood needs, gaps and barriers, and works in partnership to find and implement solutions to give the children and families, and the staff who work with them, the quality of programming and support they all deserve.

The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative is an initiative of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and a United Way of Central and Northeastern CT partner agency.



SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MANY INDIVIDUALS
AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THIS WORK:

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL POLICY

CONNECTICUT COMMISSION ON CHILDREN

HEAD START

HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING
BRIGHTER FUTURES INITIATIVE

NORWALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NORWALK EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL

TORRINGTON EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATIVE

TORRINGTON CHILD CARE CENTER



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— INTRODUCTION —

In August of 2013, the Governor's Early Childhood Education Cabinet sponsored five focus groups of Early Childhood providers through the Family Engagement and Home Visitation Workgroup. The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative was asked to coordinate these efforts with the Workgroup. The purpose of these provider focus groups was to:

- 1) gauge their attitudes towards and experiences with parent engagement and leadership in their current roles as early childhood providers
- 2) hear and gather qualitative data from the early childhood community
- 3) create informational materials to support the provider's perspective as it relates to parent engagement and leadership

Focus groups do not give us a complete understanding of all the perspectives from the field, but they do enable identification of trends and common themes. The findings from the focus groups give us a fresh understanding of current thinking within the field, and provide critical information to policy makers on the needs and interests of the early childhood community.

Why ask early childhood providers about parent engagement and leadership?

Early childhood providers such as child care directors, teachers and support staff, home visitors, and parent educators are a few of the many providers that come in contact with parents on a regular basis during the early years of a child's life. These providers play a very important role not only with providing high-quality early learning experiences for children, but also in engaging and strengthening the

knowledge, skills, and abilities of the parents. Equally important, the parents of the children help strengthen the quality of the services provided to their children, and they can help support and advocate for the needs of the early childhood field. This reciprocal relationship creates a blanket of support that promotes strong children, families, and communities and better outcomes.

Parent engagement and leadership is a critical component of a high-quality early childhood program. It is a critical piece of the Head Start philosophy and is mandated through the Head Start Performance Standards, has been incorporated into models such as Abecedarian, outlined in Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), and built into the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards for programs serving young children.

Two sets of focus groups occurred over the past year. Seven forums were held with parents. Five focus groups were held with providers and directors in early childhood. The findings below reveal a strong opportunity for connection and partnership between families and the early childhood field for children, family and community strengthening.



WHAT PARENTS WANT

Parents were asked what kind of support they needed to help with their efforts on behalf of early childhood care. Seven Forums were held in the fall of 2012 to collect parent input on Connecticut's early childhood system. Led by the Cabinet's Family Engagement and Home Visitation Workgroup, in partnership with many agencies and foundations, parents throughout the state expressed concern about and interest in:

- The cost and availability of quality care.
- The need for respect, activities that embrace and an understanding of the diverse racial and cultural makeup of the families in CT.
- A shortage of information on what makes quality early care and education.
- A need for hubsites and information on what is available for parents in a community and region for children, ranging from leisure, to ways to meet parents to learning what helps a child succeed in school.
- Bilingual programs are in short supply, but necessary.
- Shortage of transportation hinders both choice and access of programs.
- Social Emotional factors are hard to discuss. Parents want to feel safe to discuss behavioral challenges and difficulties at home or at the early care program.
- Parents as Partners. Parents want to learn what they need to know to help their child in every way.

These findings reflect a strong opportunity for early childhood leaders and parents to work together as partners for improved child outcomes.



“Parents came to us because they wanted a cover for their children’s bus stop. We joined their efforts and supported them through the process, and they made it happen!”

— Head Start staff

FOCUS GROUP CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FIELD

Project Methodology

The project consisted of five focus groups, two of which were conducted in Norwalk, two in Hartford, and one in Torrington. Each was facilitated by Elaine Zimmerman, Co-Chair of the Family Involvement and Home Visitation workgroup and consisted of 12 early childhood providers. Each focus group lasted 2 hours.

The basic format was:

- Introductions,
- A chance for everyone to explain what they currently do to engage parents and reflect on how well that was working,
- A visioning exercise that asked providers to think about what would be different at their center and in their community if all parents really understood child development, knew what quality looked like and were articulate, effective advocates to make sure that children got the quality early care and education that they deserve.
- Sharing of what would be different in that vision
- Pairing off to discuss several questions related to working with parents on deepening or expanding partnerships with parents around early care quality and policies to achieve it.
- Sharing highlights of those discussions
- Wrap up.

“Parents drive the center. It is different when parents are truly in the driver’s seat than when policy makers are.

— Family Center Director

Make-up of the focus groups

Care was taken to recruit a total of 60 participants, 12 participants per focus group. The groups included a diverse group of staff from the following programs/organizations:

- All Our Kin
- Asylum Hill Family Center – Catholic Charities
- Bloomfield Family Child Care home provider
- Bloomfield Family Resource Center
- Brookside Preschool
- Canaan Child Care Center
- Catholic Charities– Triple P
- Community Renewal Team – Head Start
- Education Connection
- El Centro de Desarrollo y Reafirmación Familiar – Catholic Charities
- El Pequeñin
- Even Start
- Family/Children’s Agency
- Fox Run Family Resource Center
- Growing Seeds Preschool
- Hartford Department of Families, Children, Youth, and Recreation
- Hartford Neighborhood Center
- Hartford Public Schools
- Kinder Care Learning Center
- Maria Seymour Brooker Memorial, Inc.
- Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance/Child First
- Norwalk Community College
- Norwalk Community Health Center
- Norwalk Public Schools
- Nurturing Families
- Parker Memorial Family Center – Catholic Charities
- SAND Family Resource Center – Village for Children and Families
- Southside Family Center – Catholic Charities
- The Children’s Playhouse Too
- Torrington Child Care Center
- Torrington Public Schools

The overwhelming majority of the participants were women with male representation from Fatherhood programs. Roughly a quarter of the participants spoke English as a second language with Spanish as their primary language. Almost all participants worked with lower income families in subsidized programs.

“There is so much going on in Hartford. It makes a big difference when everyone is talking about parent engagement and leadership together in a community.”

— Hartford Provider

WHAT EARLY CHILDHOOD THOUGHT LEADERS DISCUSSED - FINDINGS FROM THE FOCUS GROUPS

- **Parent engagement is critically important to early care providers** – All providers expressed by citing the research and through personal stories the importance of working with parents and that parents are the “child’s first teacher.”
- **Culture, Diversity, and Joy** – All focus groups stated that when a parent’s culture and diversity is celebrated and highlighted, meetings, events, or workshops are always more successful with parent participation and engagement.
- **Home visitation offers time and depth** – Providers who have the freedom to engage parents in their home or in the community report that this strategy helps to develop relationships with parents and enables them to engage with parents in meaningful ways. Programs such as Head Start and Nurturing Families are just a few of the types of programs that have this ability.
- **Parents Can Partner in Different Ways** – The term “Parent Engagement” means different things to different people, and is used to describe an array of activities along a continuum. This continuum starts with parents engaging with their own children all the way to parents as leaders in changing public policy.
- **Partnership, Not Services** – Many providers view the parents they work with through a traditional human service lens and see them as people only in need of services. Parent leadership was not a focus area for most early childhood providers.
- **Fathers Matter** – Providers noted that dads play a very important role and are increasingly more present in programs. Providers stated that the dads need to be called out in ways that are respectful and specific to males.
- **Current Practice of Engaging Parents Isn’t That Successful** – Providers care deeply about the children and families they work with, and expressed the vital role parents play within their programs. However, many reported having a tough time in not only getting parents to attend events and meetings, but to engage in meaningful ways – especially in leadership roles such as advisory groups.
- **Build Provider Capacity** – Providers agreed that engaging parents is important and they want to do a better job, however, many expressed the need for training and tools to increase their ability to do it more effectively.
- **Connect with Child Outcomes** – The work of partnering with parents is seen as separate or “another thing to do” and not tied to child outcomes on a systematic level for all providers. Providers acknowledged trying to partner with parents, but that it was many times difficult due to time restraints and responsibilities of their work.
- **Link to Public Policy** – Many of the providers felt disengaged with public policy, with the disengagement growing the closer they worked directly with the children. In general, providers reported that at work, they do not discuss the impact of public policy on the families they serve or its impact on the early childhood field. As a result they felt ill equipped to help parents change policy.
- **Community Together** – Providers greatly appreciated working in partnership with other community providers, and felt the value of collaboration. The whole community needs to be involved and come together to create a fully systematic approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Adopt a common framework that defines parent engagement and leadership along a continuum and connects it back to child and family outcomes.

Parent engagement can be framed along a continuum that is tied to positive child outcomes and school readiness goals. Such frameworks already exist, and are being used by some organizations and initiatives in Connecticut. National models include Strengthening Families (www.cssp.org) and the Head Start Parent and Community Engagement Framework (<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family>).

Ensure parent leadership is an essential part of the framework

Along the parent engagement continuum, parent leadership is an area that needs to be embedded in the inception and design of all program models that see parents as equal partners at the table. This is a void that Connecticut is well positioned to fill. Connecticut has been on the forefront in developing parent leadership training programs like the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI), People Empowering People (PEP) and Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (ParentSEE). Augmenting parent engagement frameworks, such as Strengthening Families, with a parent leadership component will increase its effectiveness by helping shift the culture of parent engagement to a strength-based lens at all points throughout the continuum. The early childhood field also benefits from the support and advocacy of the families they work with to be able to run high-quality programs. As the cost of care continues to rise and the reimbursements and fees stay the same, programs continually struggle with limited resources to run high-quality programs.

Provide training and support to Parents and Providers

In the focus groups, providers voiced their frustration with their inability to engage many of their parents and asked for training and support to improve their efforts. In order to expand provider efforts to engage parents, programs will need training, support, and tools to achieve successful results. In addition, all providers who work with children and families should have opportunities to convene together routinely to reflect on lessons learned, successes, policies and procedures, and data sharing.

Include parent engagement as an essential piece to all programming and systems building initiatives

Parent engagement, especially as it relates to parent leadership, is many times not a priority when designing and developing programming and infrastructure for children and families. As a result, parent engagement is not implemented as an important part of an overall system of supports for children and families. This is especially true as it relates to families of diverse backgrounds.

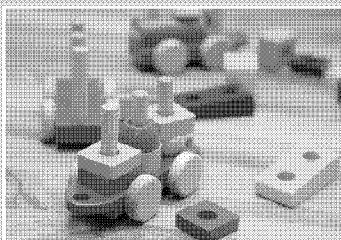


What Providers Can Do

- ◆ Offer parent engagement training at least yearly for staff
- ◆ Discuss parent engagement as an agenda topic at every staff meeting with examples of how the work ties back to child outcomes
- ◆ Partner with parents to support their child's learning and development
- ◆ Seek parent input into programmatic decisions
- ◆ Support parents on advisory boards
- ◆ Working with parents on selected community-wide issues
- ◆ Provide parents with access to parent leadership training by offering it on-site, through hands-on project based learning, and by connecting with community based groups and organizations that offer leadership training

What Policy Makers Can Do

- ◆ Continue and maximize the Parent Trust Act, Connecticut's model policy that creates a funding stream for family civics opportunities and skills development on the community level.
- ◆ Ensure the Family Engagement and Support standard of the Quality Rating and Improvement System continues to be a critical component, and is supported by professional development and technical assistance.
- ◆ To support the positive effects that parent leaders bring to a community, a systematic approach that includes local government and Mayors, public schools, early childhood providers, philanthropy, and others needs to be created. Leadership can be sustained and grown by connecting parent leaders to opportunities outside their immediate organization and to higher levels such as boards, commissions, and task forces



- ◆ Provide, reallocate, or combine funding for:

- Professional development and support in implementing parent engagement strategies for early childhood providers.
- Positions within organizations that are specifically geared towards parent engagement and have the freedom to work with parents outside the agency doors.

What the Community Can Do

- ◆ Create a community-wide taskforce committed to parent engagement. This can be through the local municipality, Board of Education, or through a community based initiative.
- ◆ Ensure parent engagement is a focus in every community-wide plan or funding decision that involves children.
- ◆ Publicly post leadership positions available in the city or town such as boards, commissions, and political opportunities.
- ◆ Match interested parent leaders with local and state leadership opportunities.

What Parents Can Do

- ◆ Find out how policies related to young children impact your child, your family and your neighborhood.
- ◆ Learn what makes a quality early care program. What does the research say about the components that must be in place?
- ◆ Assure ways to help your child's early care and education setting be excellent. Ask the Director and providers what they do to assure quality and how parents can participate.
- ◆ Celebrate evenings or days that honor different cultures and diversity so children are exposed to different food, dress and songs and learn to embrace the differences that make up your community.

“If this is not a team effort, it is the child that shuts down.”
— Preschool Teacher

WHY ENGAGE PARENTS?

Parents need and want to be involved from the onset in partnerships that serve their children best. Effectively engaging families in partnerships with both organizations and local and state government lays the foundation for positive outcomes.

Benefits to PARENTS:

- builds knowledge and skills
- opens doors for employment opportunities
- creates a sense of belonging
- offers a sense of accomplishment
- provides parents opportunities to effect meaningful change
- increases sense of personal power
- increases confidence in parents’ ability to effect change
- provides parents opportunities to network with other families and providers

* Excerpted from *Making Room at the Table*, Family Resource Coalition of America, 1998.

Benefits to CHILDREN:

- earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
- be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
- attend school regularly
- have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- graduate and go on to postsecondary education



Benefits to PROGRAMS

- creates active recipients of care and services
- creates advocates for the program
- creates a positive reputation for the program within the community
- increases market demand for the program
- more support all around for the program by parents
- increases staff morale
- parents provide invaluable insights about family needs and preferences so that programs are truly responsive to consumers. Their insights can help steer the actions aimed at improving quality, increasing public awareness, and enhancing consumer use of high-quality early childhood programs.

Benefits to COMMUNITIES:

- creates a community with leadership role models for other families
- parents continue their engagement with community groups and government, i.e. boards or commission, political positions, task forces, etc.
- parents broaden public support and action through their connections to other families and members of their community
- parents bring unanticipated partners to the table to increase support
- parent voices can also have influence with local officials

Many early childhood programs have effectively engaged parents. The following strategies reflect their experiences and insights.

EVERY ENCOUNTER COUNTS.

Early childhood providers have very busy jobs. The demands on staff have grown tremendously in response to the recognition of the critical importance of high-quality learning experiences in the early years. Whether teaching staff have a class full of energy filled children, home visitors have a large caseload, or Directors are in the middle of dealing with a crisis, it is critical that staff approach every encounter with parents positively, especially the first one.

Tips:

- 1 Say hello and welcome every family every time. If you work in a classroom, acknowledge every child and family as they drop off or pick up their child. If you are holding a workshop, make sure a staff member is standing by the door to welcome and direct every family.
- 2 When meeting parents, remember something about them, their family, or their child that you can then comment on or ask about the next time you see them.
- 3 Regularly inquire about their lives outside of the program.
- 4 Recognize and acknowledge parents' and/or children's strengths, growth, or efforts at every opportunity.
- 5 Meet parents where they feel comfortable and are equal. All staff, especially those who work in offices, need to leave their desks often and meet parents in less formal settings like the hallway, near their child's classroom, during coffee time, etc.

VALUE AND CELEBRATE CULTURE AND DIVERSITY.

Early childhood programs and services partner with families of many different structures, socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Regardless of the family make-up and background, people are proud and value their culture and diversity.

Tips:

- 1 Recognize groups and offer specialized information – parents feel more comfortable and are more willing to engage when they know ahead of time that they will have something in common with other parents. Offer specialized workshops just for fathers and other male figures, parents of children with disabilities, teen parents, etc.
- 2 Organize smaller, more intimate opportunities for parents to engage. Offer meetings of children within the same classroom, or parents that live in the same neighborhood to get together in a smaller setting where they can get to know each other easier.
- 3 Establish working partnerships with other organizations or groups that have a specialty working with specific populations (Dad's Groups, Latino organizations, military support groups).
- 4 Providers reported overwhelmingly that multi-cultural events turn parents out. Provide a space and invite families to cook a traditional meal from their country or to bring in a traditional object to show. Parents and staff are proud of their heritage, and have an easier time during these opportunities talking and getting to know one another.



“With parent permission, I share the contact information with each family so parents can call each other for child play dates, rides to workshops, or to just to get together outside of the program.”

—Preschool Teacher

LISTEN TO AND LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.

Parents know a lot. They know the most about their children, they know the most about their community, and they know the most about the strengths and needs of the program from a consumer perspective. They have a keen eye to identifying needed changes to programs, policies, or procedures that staff just can't see. Parents not only experience these challenges, but also many times have ideas and solutions to solve those challenges.

Tips:

- 1 Don't ignore a quick comment from a parent – actively listen to what a parent is saying to identify where there might be an issue or an opportunity, and ask probing questions to help gather more information. Then act on the information!
- 2 Give parents your full attention. It can be difficult to have conversations when children are around or when other parents are near. State that their comments are valuable to you and that you want to be available for them. Ask them to come a few minutes early at pick-up time to have the ability to talk privately one-on-one, or schedule a mutually convenient time.

“In the Family Center, we have parent ambassadors who take the lead in making sure new families feel comfortable and are connected right away. Parents feel more comfortable with other parents, and it is our role to support and encourage that.”

— Family Center Director

ENGAGE PARENTS FROM THE BEGINNING.

Make sure that parents are involved from the beginning on opportunities, big or small. Parents are more likely to feel ownership if they are part of the decision making.

Tips:

- 1 Ask parents about their interests and what is important to them. Use a survey or assessment tool to gather this data from parents, and involve parents in analyzing the results.
- 2 Engage parents in helping to plan a workshop that is important to them and based on parent feedback, or having them link you with a community resource they know.
- 3 Learn from parents by asking them about their child's interests, likes, and what works for them.



SUPPORT A COMMUNITY OF CHAMPIONS.

Parents are more likely to feel comfortable and empowered if they are not the only parent and are not expected to speak on behalf of all parents. Adding more parents to a group is not enough. Ensure diversity by balancing experienced parent leaders with those who are new to the role. Include fathers and grandparents as well as mothers. Seek a range of parents from different economic and ethnic backgrounds.

Tips:

- 1 Encourage parents to recruit and mentor other parents, and provide incentives for their efforts.
- 2 Intentionally connect parents who have been in your program with some of the newer parents.
- 3 Acknowledge and reward parents who take on leadership roles and become champions.

MAXIMIZE PARENTS' STRENGTHS.

Get to know the individual strengths of parents. Every parent has strengths no matter their situation. Good organizations and leaders maximize the strengths of all partners, and parents are no exception. Offer a wide range of roles that parents can play to contribute in meaningful ways.

Tips:

- 1 Identify the strengths of parents, even when they are dealing with crisis situations. To help build resilience, help parents see their strengths even in the toughest of times, and celebrate the successes achieved.
- 2 Be aware of how a parent would like to engage, and build from there. Meet parents where they are, support their strengths, and intentionally connect them to opportunities.
- 3 Ensure parent decision making authority at all program levels (with their child, in the classroom, in the organization, and in the community)



“If we want to enable parents to become decision-makers, and participants in children’s programs and policies, we must expand the leadership training programs and develop more methods to increase parent involvement and leadership in children’s health, safety, and learning.”

— Parent

PROVIDE THE NECESSARY SUPPORTS FOR PARENTS TO BE SUCCESSFUL PARTNERS.

Some parents will need guidance to engage and make meaningful contributions. Others will need support in developing the skills necessary to voice their opinions and take action based on their interest and input. Parents of young children lead very busy lives. Family supports such as food, child care, and transportation make it easier for parents to participate. Not only do such supports matter on a practical level, but they also improve group cohesion and morale.

Tips:

- 1 Create a space where parents feel comfortable and valued. The emotional and physical environment should be warm and welcoming.
- 2 Establish open communication channels to be able to respond quickly to parent requests for support.
- 3 Provide hands-on training and guidance for parents taking action.

CONNECT TO THE COMMUNITY.

Be knowledgeable and connect to resources in the community that offer leadership training and action. Share and use this information with parents.

Tips:

- 1 Know what community action groups are formed and active in your town or neighborhood.
- 2 Visit the groups to let them know about the services your program offers, and explore ways to collaborate.
- 3 Bring leadership training and action groups to the parents. If you work at a center, open your doors to these groups.
- 4 Share information of current community issues and discuss with parents.

“I am now going to have the parents design their own space at the center. It will be better than what I or my staff could ever do.”

— Program Director



PARENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING INSTITUTE (PLTI), HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

The Parent Leadership Training Institute is a training program that seeks to enable parents, grandparents, and others raising children to become leading advocates for children. The program was designed collaboratively by the Connecticut Commission on Children, the American Leadership Forum, and Leadership Greater Hartford.

The goals of the program are to:

- help parents become the leaders they would like to be for children and families;
 - expand the capacity of parents as change agents for children and families;
 - develop communities of parents within regions of the state that will support one another in skill development and successful parent action for children;
 - facilitate systems change for parental involvement with increased utilization of parents in policy and process decisions; and
 - increase parent-child interactions and improve child outcomes through parent involvement.
- In an effort to achieve these goals, parents participate in a comprehensive training that includes a retreat to develop group communication, 10 weeks of classes on self and perception of leadership, 10 weeks on practicing democracy and civic skills, and a graduation at the State Capitol. After they have completed the training, parents serve as mentors and advisors for future training classes. The following states have adapted and are using the PLTI model: California, Illinois, Kentucky, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Vermont.



ESTABLISH OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS TO MEET DIVERSE CIVIC LEADERS.

Bringing parents together with policy leaders can make parents feel more appreciated for participating in the process and feel more connected to their community.

Tips:

- 1 Link parents and policy leaders together. Policy makers will respond to both formal and informal requests to meet. Organize opportunities for parents to talk with local and state leaders.
- 2 Support parents in attending local and state policy meetings. Organize a group to attend a city council meeting, go tour the Capitol, or attend a Board of Education meeting.
- 3 Support parents in their role as advocates.

Cultivate public attention for the contributions that parents make. Media outlets often look for stories of parents in leadership roles. Public officials are more likely to respond if parents deliver the message. Look for ways to bring recognition to parents. This not only makes parents feel good, it raises awareness about the work and the important issues.

Celebrate! Celebrate! Celebrate!

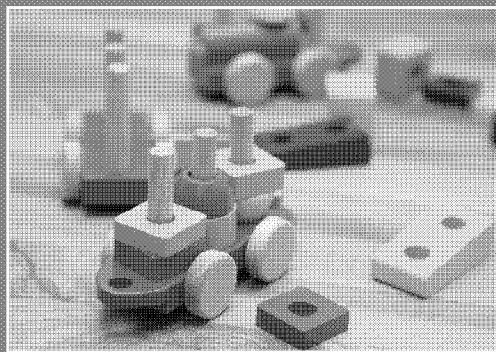
Awards dinners, certificates, acknowledgements from prominent businesses or political figures, and small and large efforts are all ways to celebrate the contributions of parents (and other partners). Such occasions build good will and momentum to continue the hard work.



TOOLS FOR ENGAGING PARENTS

This section contains tools and resources that staff, parents, organizations, and communities can use to support and encourage parent engagement and leadership.

1. Tips for Engaging Parents
2. A Sample of Questions to Consider as Thought Leaders in Early Childhood



RESOURCES

Strengthening Families™ A Protective Factors Framework

The Center for the Study of Social Policy

<http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families>

This website includes information on the Strengthening Families framework that helps to build the five protective factors in families:

- 1) Parental resilience
- 2) Social connections
- 3) Concrete support in times of need
- 4) Knowledge of parenting and child development
- 5) Social and emotional competence of children

Strengthening Families has developed an online program assessment tool for early childhood providers that can be found at: http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/resources/SF_Program-SelfAssessment_2012.pdf

Head Start Family and Community Engagement Framework and Assessment

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family>

Head Start's National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement created this framework and assessment tool to help programs promote children's well-being by engaging parents and families.

For more information on state-wide resources for parent engagement and leadership, contact the Commission on Children: 18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106-1591. (860) 240-0290 www.cga.ct.gov/coc

“We need to hold ourselves accountable. If the parents aren’t engaged, it is on our backs and we need to step it up!”

— Early childhood Provider

TIPS FOR ENGAGING PARENTS

(Excerpted from: *The Child Care Partnership Project: A Guide to Engaging Parents in Public-Private Child Care Partnerships*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families Child Care Bureau).

1. **Consult numerous parents before beginning an action plan.** Seek parent input from those who will be affected by a partnership initiative.
2. **Listen to parents.** Include parent ideas as regular partnership meeting agenda items. Let parents define goals for action.
3. **Provide family supports for meetings.** Offer dinner, child care, and transportation.
4. **Use lay language.** Don't use professional in-house phrases such as "developmentally appropriate practice" when parents care about love, nurturing, and safety.
5. **Link participation to real change and active leadership.** Parents know what is real and active. They operate within power structures every day at home and at work.
6. **Offer civic skills and leadership training.** Help parents become leaders by providing them with basic information on budgets, outcomes, media power, how government works, and the policy-making process.
7. **Do not shy away from religion.** Religion is a mobilizing force in many communities. It is often a base from which parent and community action organizing can take place.
8. **Have parents recruit and mentor other parents.** Parents are more likely to get involved if they already know someone who is involved.
9. **Embrace diversity.** Tolerate differences and create agendas and plans that incorporate multiple views within shared values. Bring in the fathers and grandfathers. Include parents who are experienced leaders, as well as those who need experience being leaders.
10. **Celebrate short-term and concrete successes routinely.** Recognition of small successes builds momentum and general enthusiasm for the partnership goals.
11. **Create reciprocal relationships.** Share what parents want from the partnership, as well as what the partnership wants from parents.
12. **Select one or two parents to organize parent feedback on partnership activities in environments where parents can fully share their ideas.** Treat parents' input as primary information. Train parent facilitators to create parent memos with all parent feedback recorded for the partnership to read and discuss.
13. **Set up parent evaluation teams each year for partnership programs.** Use the opportunity to listen to the language, values, goals, and community expectations of the parents. Assess how and if the values and expectations of partnership leaders and staff correspond with parents' values and expectations.
14. **Create opportunities for parents to meet one another.** When partnerships just work with parents one on one, the opportunity for parents to meet other parents is diminished. This paints a vertical, individualized interpretation of issues, rather than a horizontal community analysis of gaps in services or needs.
15. **Create environments where children see their parents as leaders.** Reflect the values of partnership in the environments and initiatives you create. Offer dinners, honorary membership, and awards for family members who contribute to a policy. Invite family and friends to attend the honoring.

QUESTIONS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD THOUGHT LEADERS

Use these sample questions as an opportunity to open dialogue with parents, staff, and community members about parent engagement and leadership.

YES NO

☐ ☐ Do we provide parents information and guidance on the importance of parent engagement and taking leadership roles with their child's early learning experiences?

☐ ☐ Do we have a system for personal and ongoing parent outreach to invite and encourage participation and engagement?

☐ ☐ Do we have an advisory group with parents in leadership roles and with decision making authority?

☐ ☐ Do we have a process for seeking parent input to plan for program activities and offerings?

☐ ☐ Do we support and engage parents in planning both staff and parent professional development?

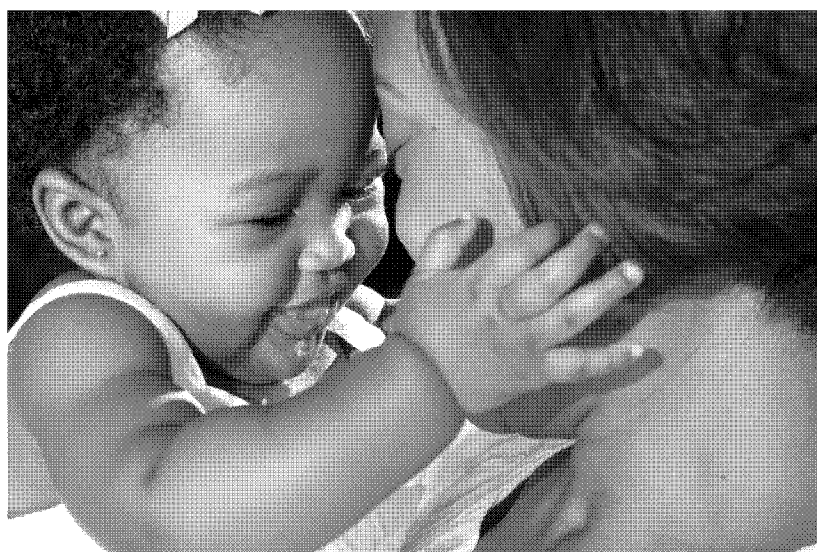
☐ ☐ Are we as a program connected to groups that inform and shape policy at the state level?

☐ ☐ Do we connect and support parents in engaging with groups that inform and shape local and/or state policy?

☐ ☐ Do we provide opportunities for staff and families to work together on community improvement or advocacy projects?

☐ ☐ Do we ensure that local, state, and federal policy issues that affect the early childhood field are discussed at staff meetings and shared with parents?

☐ ☐ Do we offer leadership development training, or know of these resources in our community to collaborate with?



FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS & PROBES

Focus Group Introduction

Introductions: Name and position

Background introduction: Why we are here

Focus group questions:

Current parent engagement/involvement work

How do you currently engage families with the work you do?

What are some of the most important things you do to engage families?

Do you have examples of ways to engage families that work and that don't work?

Do you rely on any requirements that you must meet that guides your work with parents? (NAEYC standards, HS standards, etc.)

Current shared civic work for children between agency and parents

Imagine that parents understood the components of quality early care and were spokespeople for optimal early childhood opportunity for children. What would change in the child care system? What would change in the community? Why? How?

Do you partner with parents now on early care quality and policy to achieve it? If yes, how? If no, is there a reason why not?

Would you like to partner with parents in community improvements for young children, such as quality early care, when the opportunities avail themselves? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Are there ways you could see deepening or expanding your partnerships with parents around early care quality and policies to achieve it? On other community improvements for young children?

What supports would you need or changes in the environment to have this deeper partnership with the parents of young children?

Do you think there are opportunities to work on a shared community goal with parents? If yes, what kinds of opportunities? If not, tell us about that.

Do you know how change happens for young children in the public sector in policy and budget arena? Do you as staff talk about how to improve the early care and education environment for best child outcomes? Is this something you are interested in? If yes, why? If no, why not?

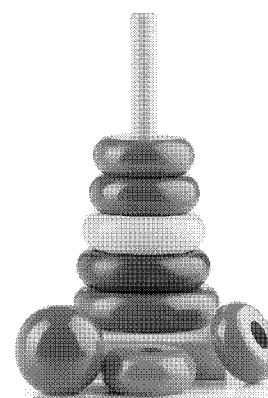
Probes

What words come to mind when I say “parent leadership”? When we talk about parent leadership, are there other words you use?

Do they think developing and/or supporting parent leadership should be part of your work?

What type of training do you want or think you need to help support parents more in your role? Do you have training in leadership development, whether for yourself or for how to build this with families in your program?

Please tell us what parent leadership resources are in your community. Are there parent leadership trainings available, are their community action groups that you work with?



NOTES

- ⁱ Research News You Can Use: Family Engagement and Early Childhood Education. <http://www.naeyc.org/content/research-news-family-engagement>
- ⁱⁱ *The Child Care Partnership Project: A Guide to Engaging Parents in Public-Private Child Care Partnerships.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families Child Care Bureau.
- ⁱⁱⁱ *The Child Care Partnership Project: A Guide to Engaging Parents in Public-Private Child Care Partnerships.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families Child Care Bureau.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between the State Department of Education (hereinafter "SDE" or "CSBE") and the Office of Early Childhood (hereinafter "OEC").

WHEREAS, Public Act 13-247 merged early childhood programs from various agencies into OEC for optimal provision of programs and services for families and children; and

WHEREAS, Special Education Preschool program, services and funding will remain with SDE for the duration of this MOU ending in the fiscal year 2015; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-38f, various agencies' early childhood programs have been merged into OEC without sufficient administrative supports; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Executive Order #35 OEC has been ordered to enter into agreements as necessary to define transitional and programmatic relationships; and

WHEREAS, SDE and OEC mutually desire clarification of the nature and scope of the roles and the responsibilities of each agency regarding early childhood programs and services; and

NOW, THEREFORE, SDE and OEC agree to the following terms and conditions:

I. PURPOSE AND DEFINITIONS: The purpose of this MOU is to define the administrative relationship between OEC and SDE for the coordinated system as stated in Executive order #35, and pursuant to Public Act 13-247, in order to the address the transition to and operation of programs within OEC as related to the following goals:

- A. Define the responsibilities of both parties in the transition period as the staff and departments/programs are consolidated into OEC;
- B. Define the working responsibilities of both parties with SDE as the designated agency to support OEC for "Administrative Purposes Only" (APO) consistent with Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-38f; and
- C. Define the commitments made by both SDE and OEC related to policy and programmatic initiatives.

II. DURATION of the MOU: July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015.

III. TRANSITIONAL ACTIVITIES: SDE will perform the following transitional functions for OEC:

A. Fiscal

1. SDE shall review all contracts related to OEC that are currently in effect, and by mutual agreement take appropriate steps, including amending any contracts as necessary, to maintain the continuity of work on or before June 30, 2014.
2. SDE shall notify vendors providing services funded by appropriations that were transferred to OEC of the change in lead agency, and the SDE shall provide such vendors with a single point of contact within OEC.
3. All payments required to be made within the fiscal year will be processed prior to June 30, 2014. (The following, a. through c., pertain only to payment of SDE Child Day Care contracts formerly operated by the Department of Social Services, now transferred to OEC pursuant to Public Act 13-247.)
 - a. SDE authorizes OEC to make payments against existing child day care contracts, currently executed by SDE and effective through June 30, 2014, using state and federal funds allotted to OEC.
 - b. Using appropriate CORE-CT procedures, SDE shall process all payments (in the "APO" capacity for OEC) to child day care contract vendors in CORE-CT against state and federal funds allotted to OEC and maintain reconciliation of those contracts and payments.
 - c. SDE agrees that OEC will maintain full programmatic oversight of said child day care contracts.
4. SDE will work with any agency whose program or responsibilities were transferred to OEC under Public Act 13-247, to transfer any contracts or agreements that are required to fiscally operate said program or responsibilities.
5. SDE will make grants on behalf of OEC utilizing bond funds identified in Connecticut Public Acts 12-189 Sec. 9(e)(4); 13-239 Sec. 13(h)(2); and 13-239 Sec. 32(g)(2) for Facility Improvements & Minor Capital Repairs for Early Childhood Sites.

B. Personnel

1. SDE agrees to transfer funds to the OEC for the three federally funded positions, two Education Consultants and one Secretary II, transferred from SDE according to Public Act 13-247.
 - a. SDE will pay a transfer invoice for the actual payroll expenses billed on a monthly basis, to include payroll, fringe benefits and any other direct payroll related costs. The collective annual salary of the three positions is \$257,915.50.

The amount to be transferred will be the actual cost of the salaries plus fringe benefits and other payroll charges.

- b. The funding used to pay these invoices will be paid from federal Title 1, IDEA section 611, and IDEA section 619 funds as identified on back up CORE-CT documentation that accompanies the transfer invoices.

C. Information Systems and Databases

1. SDE will transfer to OEC all computer technology including software, software licenses used by staff administering and operating the programs funded by appropriations that were transferred to OEC in Public Act 13-247.
2. SDE will transfer to OEC technology support and contracts related to upkeep and service for the above mentioned software.
3. SDE will transfer SDE databases and information systems related to the new Office of Early Childhood pursuant to Public Act 13-147.

D. Federal Grants

1. SDE will prepare and submit federal grant applications that are related to Early Childhood programs and initiatives.
2. SDE will prepare and submit quarterly and annual financial and program reports required for federal grants through June 30, 2014.

E. Program Management and Reporting

1. SDE shall continue to manage state programs including dissemination of Request for Proposals and contracts.
2. SDE shall prepare and submit all state and other program reports and respond to mandates and requirements related to federal and state funding guidelines.

F. Assets Management

1. SDE staff computers will be transferred to the new OEC.
2. SDE will inventory equipment including computers and office equipment when applicable.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SDE UNDER APO STATUS

A. SDE will perform the following personnel functions for OEC:

1. Developing, reviewing and/or managing policies and procedures pertaining to recruitment, selection, employee counseling, benefits, retention, time and attendance,

performance management, workers' compensation, staff development and training, safety and workplace violence prevention;

2. Processing Human Resources transactions;
3. Maintaining employee records, including supervisory records;
4. Investigating complaints of employee misconduct or violation of agency and/or state policies;
5. Advising administrative officials, managers and supervisors on labor relations, human resources policy and procedure, organizational structure and use of job classifications;
6. Advising administrative officials, managers and supervisors and employees regarding federal and state personnel statutes, rules, regulations, policies, guidelines, and collective bargaining contract provisions;
7. Establishing and serving on OEC's Threat Assessment Team;
8. Providing OEC with employment-related posters/notices required by state and federal law;
9. Establishing protocols for the separation of employees from employment with OEC, including but not limited to, exit interviews;
10. Advising managers and supervisors regarding performance issues and appropriate disciplinary actions;
11. Partnering with administrative officials in strategic planning to ensure alignment of human resources activities with organizational goals and strategies; and
12. Representing the agency at labor relations proceedings from step one meetings through and including arbitration.

B. SDE will perform the following payroll functions for OEC:

1. Administering and processing payroll, time and attendance, paychecks, workers' compensation, health benefits, and employee fringe benefits programs and activities for OEC employees;
2. Preparing reports and correspondence and maintaining accuracy of payroll computations for OEC; and
3. Processing retroactive payments, coding changes and reconciliations for OEC employees.

C. SDE will perform the following affirmative action functions for OEC:

1. Developing and implementing OEC Affirmative Action Plans, reports, programs, policies and procedures as they relate to federal and state Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action ("EEO/AA") laws, regulations and guidelines;

2. Advising agency officials on EEO/AA program issues and problems, and recommending, and assisting with the implementation of, solutions;
3. Assessing Affirmative Action program needs and reviewing recruitment packages with the assigned SDE HR Liaison;
4. Representing the agency at OEC hearings, meetings and technical assistance sessions related to the filing of Affirmative Action Plans;
5. Counseling employees on career development, training and upward mobility and discrimination complaint resolution;
6. Providing and/or scheduling training for compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws; and
7. Investigating discrimination/harassment complaints against OEC.
8. OEC is responsible for understanding and operating under the rules and requirements of the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) and EEO/AA.

D. SDE will perform the following business office functions for OEC:

1. Coordinating and assisting with the preparation of budgets for General Fund-appropriated accounts;
2. Advising and assisting OEC with regard to account balances;
3. Developing routine monthly and year-end financial reports for General Fund-appropriated accounts;
4. Processing personnel action requests;
5. Assisting OEC with interactions between OEC and the Office of Policy and Management (“OPM”) and the Office of Fiscal Analysis (“OFA”); and
6. Providing OEC with OEC-related financial information within SDE custody and control.

E. SDE Bureau of Fiscal Services will perform the following grant-related functions for OEC:

1. Preparing or assisting with the preparation of grant budgets;
2. Monitoring expenses;
3. Preparing reports required by federal and state laws;
4. Closing out accounts; and
5. Drawing down funds.

F. SDE Bureau of Fiscal Services will perform the following property management-related functions for OEC:

1. Receiving assets in the Core CT system;
2. Tagging items, entering tag numbers into Core CT and coordinating items for surplus; and
3. Preparing annual inventory reports.

G. SDE Bureau of Fiscal Services will perform the following purchasing-related functions for OEC:

1. Determining how to procure goods and services based on OEC's stated needs, including researching and selecting sources of supply, methods of purchase, and payment options;
2. Preparing purchase orders and approvals in Core CT, including all necessary forms;
3. Providing guidance and assistance to agencies regarding personal service agreements and purchase of service agreements;
4. Developing SBE set-aside goals;
5. Preparing set-aside related reports including quarterly set-aside reports;
6. Preparing quarterly OEC reports;
7. Preparing monthly SEEC reports; and
8. Preparing quarterly General Letter 71 reports.

H. SDE Bureau of Fiscal Services will perform the following accounts payable-related functions for OEC:

1. Processing payments upon receipt of invoices and authorization from OEC;
2. Processing agency-approved travel authorization and reimbursement, upon receipt of approved travel and reimbursement requests from OEC;
3. Processing tuition reimbursement requests, upon receipt of all necessary documentation from OEC;
4. Reconciling purchase orders;
5. Cancelling and reissuing lost vendor checks; and
6. Processing payment of transfer invoices between state agencies.

I. SDE Bureau of Fiscal Services will perform the following accounts receivable-related functions for OEC:

1. Depositing checks into OEC bank accounts and preparing associated Core CT forms;
2. Processing Accounts Receivable billing;
3. Preparing aging reports and dunning letters; and
4. Assisting OEC with collections referrals and write-offs.

J. SDE Bureau of Fiscal Services will perform the following additional functions for OEC:

1. Administering Single Audit Act functions; Coordinating responses to auditors;
2. Acting as OEC's Core CT Security Liaison, including identifying appropriate profiles, processing applications for role access, permissions and changes, and resetting Core CT passwords;
3. Acting as OEC's Telecom Liaison, including telephone system installations and moves, troubleshooting, repair requests, programming assistance, directory updates, reporting and billing functions;
4. Acting as p-card coordinator for OEC p-card, including processing OEC p-card bills and reconciling OEC p-card statements; and
5. Preparing, coordinating or updating the following reports:
 - a. GAAP reports;
 - b. SWCAP reports;
 - c. Bank Account Project reports;
 - d. Core CT Approval Roles (CO-512);
 - e. State Facility Plans;
 - f. SEFA reports;
 - g. Internal Control Questionnaires
 - h. State Agency Contact reports; and
 - i. Accountability Directive reports.

K. The Bureau of Information Technology will perform the following functions for OEC:

1. Administer and support LAN and WAN network and remote access to all OEC systems including email and shared drives;
2. Procure, configure, deploy and support all desktop, laptop or tablet devices for the OEC;
3. With SDE's IT insight and full support, and with OEC's guidance and intensive investment, partner to design, develop, implement and support the new Early Childhood Information System, Data Warehouse Reporting System and Quality Rating Improvement System and associated databases and infrastructure;
4. Design, create and support system and data integration between OEC systems and SDE systems;

5. Provide data and user role based security for all OEC systems;
6. Provide system and database backup and restore operations;
7. Act as the liaison for Information Technology solutions supplied to the OEC from DAS BEST;
8. Provide Information Technology Governance and Enterprise Architecture direction to OEC; and
9. Provide Information Technology Project Management and System Development Methodology activities to OEC.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF OEC UNDER APO STATUS

A. OEC shall be responsible for the following activities and functions:

1. Designating at least one staff as point of contact to assure collaboration and facilitation of transitional activities;
2. Participating in hiring/promotional interview panels except at SDE's discretion;
3. Administer or oversee agency programs, including coordinating or monitoring program activity;
4. Testifying on behalf of OEC at routine legislative hearings regarding OEC's budget or deficiencies;
5. Creating measures and narratives for budgets;
6. Drafting legislation or acting as OEC's legislative liaison;
7. Managing or reconcile individually-assigned agency p-cards and accounts; and
8. Maintaining OEC's software inventory.
9. Collaborating with SDE to seek and secure such resources as SDE may require to carry out its OEC-related responsibilities.
10. Consistently and continuously informing SDE of policy or programmatic initiatives in contemplation or information that are relevant to or intersect with the K-12 system.

B. OEC retains responsibility for the following functions:

1. Providing SDE with accurate and timely information, records and data required by SDE to perform its personnel, payroll, affirmative action and business office functions and meet audit requirements;
2. Complying with protocols established by SDE for separating employees from employment with OEC, including but not limited to, collecting all OEC property from departing employees;
3. Completing performance appraisals and imposing appropriate disciplinary actions;
4. Maintaining bulletin boards that display the employment-related posters/notices provided by SDE;
5. Complying with protocols established by SDE Bureau of Fiscal Services for all Business Office related transactions;

6. Complying with all protocols regarding purchasing from contracted vendors (on Core CT State Comptroller's Vendor file) using purchase orders;
7. Creating measures and narratives for budgets;
8. Making all decisions regarding budget reduction, reallocation, and expansion initiatives;
9. Managing and reconciling individually assigned agency p-cards and accounts;
10. Ensuring receipt, inspection and acceptance of good/services and supplying verification/notification of same to SDE;
11. Providing SDE with Grant Award Notifications;
12. Providing SDE with Federal Financial Reports including any supporting back-up;
13. Providing SDE with Draw down request and access requirements;
14. Providing SDE with OPM Grant Award Documents;
15. Providing SDE with the B107 Grant Requests;
16. Allowing the designated SDE staff members access to all appropriate staff, files, records, manuals, and other documentation, as necessary;
17. Providing the following resources to the designated SDE staff members:
 - a. OEC letterhead;
 - b. Appropriate work space and parking as necessary;
 - c. Access to telephone, computer, printer, fax and copy machines; and
18. Providing SDE with all grantor correspondence.

VI. POLICY AND PROGRAMMATIC INITIATIVES

- A. SDE and OEC will collaborate in the development of policy and programmatic initiatives and related guidance for dissemination among districts and communities across the State of Connecticut:
 1. Promote the development of early literacy.
 2. Alignment of new Birth to age 5 early learning and development standards to K-12 standards; alignment of the State's Learning and Development Standards across all Essential Domains of School Readiness.
 3. Identification of strategies to address the health behavioral and developmental needs of Children with High Needs from PK-3.

4. Development of strategies to improve learning outcomes for PK-3 by focusing on leadership development of elementary school principals in order to expand their knowledge base regarding the importance of early childhood growth and development.
5. Alignment of professional preparation related to Birth to Grade 3 for improved coordination between early childhood and K-3.
6. Implementation of teacher preparation and professional development programs and strategies that emphasize pedagogy and the delivery of developmentally appropriate content for children in the early years to Grade 3.
7. Coordination with institutions of higher education so that teacher preparation programs address the early years and the importance of alignment with Grade 3 benchmarks and standards (working within and in collaboration with the Educator Preparation Advisory Council process).
8. Coordinate administration of Kindergarten Entry Assessment to inform efforts to close the school readiness gap at K entry, to inform instruction on the early elementary years and to inform parents about their children's status and involve them in decisions about their children's education.
9. Coordination of student data systems (i.e., PKIS, PSIS, KEI) related to enhancement of existing systems to include early childhood programs and/or building of data systems to monitor the status of children's learning and comprehensive services.
10. Coordination of service delivery with Family Resource Centers that address comprehensive services for families and children birth to Grade 3 including health, education and training.
11. Coordination of policy and guidance with special education services in the Local Education Agencies (LEA) for improved transition planning from early childhood programs to the school setting and for improved collaboration between the early childhood programs and the school teams.
12. Development of quality indicators of PK programs managed by LEAs so that they are aligned with CTs Early Learning and Development Standards.
13. Leveraging existing federal, state, and local resources including but not limited to funds received under Title I, Title II and ESEA and IDEA.
14. SDE shall consistently and continuously inform OEC of policy or programmatic initiatives in contemplation or in formation that are relevant to or intersect with the early childhood system.
15. OEC and SDE will appoint staff to serve as points of contact for the above collaborative activities.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

- A. Both parties agree to have specifically named liaisons at all times. These representatives of the parties will be the first contacts regarding any questions and problems that may arise during implementation and operation of the contract. Wherever under this contract one party is required to give notice to the other, such notice shall be deemed given upon delivery. Notices shall be addressed as follows via postal mail or e-mail:

In case of notice to the CSBE:

Gary Pescosolido
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
860-713-6667
E-mail:gary.pescosolido@ct.gov

In case of notice to OEC:

Myra Jones-Taylor
Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Tel. 860-713-6790
E-mail:myra.jones-taylor@ct.gov

Said notices shall become effective on the date of receipt or the date specified in the notice, whichever comes later. Either party may change the address or liaison for notification purposes by mailing or emailing a notice stating the change and noting the new address and liaison.

- B. MAINTENANCE OF SEPARATE RECORDS. OEC shall maintain records in a manner that will enable the CSBE to easily audit and examine any books, documents, papers and other records maintained in support of the contract. All such documents shall be made available to CSBE at its request, in conformance with relevant state and federal laws and regulations, and shall be clearly identifiable as pertaining to the contract.
- C. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS. The CSBE and its duly authorized representatives during the contract period and for a period of five (5) years after the completion of the term of this contract shall have access to and the right to examine any of its books, records, documents

and papers pertinent to this contract for the purpose of making audit, examination, excerpts and transcriptions.


- D. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES. Any dispute concerning a question of fact arising under the contract, which is not disposed of by agreement, shall be decided by the Commissioner of the SDE and the Executive Director of the OEC. Pending final resolution of a dispute, both parties shall proceed diligently with the performance of the contract in accordance with duties outlined herein.
- E. AGREEMENT REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS. Revisions to the agreement's objectives, services, or plan including revisions to due dates for reports and completion of objectives or services, must be approved in writing by both parties. A formal amendment, in writing, shall not be effective until executed by both parties to the agreement, and shall be required for extensions to the final date of the agreement period, and any other agreement revision determined material by the parties.
- F. CANCELLATION CLAUSE. This agreement shall remain in full force and effect for the entire term of the agreement period stated above unless canceled either party, with thirty (30) days written notice to the other. Either party has the right to cancel this agreement without prior notice when either party deems the health or welfare of its service recipients are endangered or the funding for the agreement is no longer available.
- G. STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The statutory authority for the CSBE to enter into this agreement is Conn. Gen. Stat. Sections 4-5, 4-8 and 42 U.S.C. Section 1751 et seq. The statutory authority for the OEC to enter into this agreement is Public Act 13-247 and Executive Order #35.
- H. NONDISCRIMINATION. The provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 4a-60 concerning nondiscrimination, as amended by Public Acts 91-58 and 91-407 are incorporated herein by reference.

VIII. ACCEPTANCES AND APPROVALS.

FOR:

THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

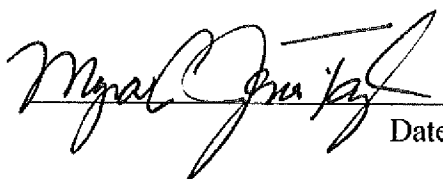
Commissioner Stefan Pryor

 10/13/11
Date

FOR:

THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Executive Director, Myra Jones-Taylor

 10.13.11
Date

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
AND
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is entered into by and between the Connecticut Department of Social Services (hereinafter "DSS") and the Office of Early Childhood (hereinafter "OEC").

WHEREAS, Public Act 13-247 merged early childhood programs from various agencies into OEC for optimal provision of programs and services for families and children; and

WHEREAS, various programs, services and funding related to early childhood will remain with DSS through June 30, 2014, the end of state fiscal year ("SFY") ; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Executive Order #35, the OEC has been authorized to enter into agreements as necessary to define transitional and programmatic relationships; and

WHEREAS, DSS and OEC mutually desire clarification of the nature and scope of the roles and responsibilities of each agency regarding early childhood programs and services.

NOW THEREFORE, DSS and OEC agree to the terms and conditions below.

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this MOA is to define the relationship and the partnership between the OEC and DSS and to set forth the mutual understanding of the responsibilities of both parties during the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014 as staff and programs are transitioned from DSS and consolidated into the OEC.
- II. **PROJECT DURATION:** This Agreement shall become effective upon its execution by both parties, and will expire on June 30, 2014 unless further extended by the written agreement of both parties.
- III. **DSS RESPONSIBILITIES:**
 - a. Contracts.
 - i. Through Executive Order #35 the OEC has been designated as the lead agency for the administration of certain programs, the funding for which has been appropriated to the OEC through Section 1 of Public Act (PA) 13-247.

- ii. Prior to the passage of PA 13-247 and the effective date of Executive Order #35, DSS was the designated lead agency for the programs identified in Section 1 of PA 13-247 and as lead agency has entered into and maintained contracts that support and assist in the administration of those programs. DSS shall review with OEC each of the existing DSS contracts that support and assist in the administration of such programs transferred to OEC.
- iii. Contract number 06DSS2802AX/119UWCCCQ9 by and between the DSS and the United Way of Connecticut for the operation of 211 Childcare Infoline and Memorandum of Agreement 12SDE0037AA by and between DSS and the State Department of Education for the Connecticut Chats-A-Course program shall transfer to the OEC effective July 1, 2013. During the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, if necessary and as requested by OEC, DSS shall provide guidance to OEC on these agreements and programs.
- iv. Following the review of the contracts identified in paragraph 2 above and as directed by and in consultation with OEC, DSS shall take appropriate steps to transfer such contracts to OEC through the execution of amendments to any such contracts to ensure continuity of services. Such review and transfer activities shall be completed on or before June 30, 2014.
- v. Prior to the transfer of the contracts as described in paragraph 4 above and in consultation with OEC, DSS shall provide written notice to those contractors with contracts that will be transferred to OEC of the change in lead agency from DSS to the OEC, the effective date of the change and the identification of the Contractors' single point of contact at the OEC.
- vi. Until such time as the contracts described in paragraphs 4 and 5 are transferred to OEC, DSS shall continue to manage the contracts and process all required payments pursuant to the terms of the contracts prior to June 30, 2014. Management of the contracts shall include but may not be limited to the support and management of the funds, programs and contracts currently operated by the Children's Trust Fund (CTF).

- vii. The Commissioner of DSS shall remain as the authorized signatory for the contracts described in paragraphs 4 and 5 until such time as the management of such contracts are transferred to OEC.

b. Fiscal and Reporting.

- i. OEC shall transfer the federal and state funds that support the CTF that were appropriated to the OEC through Section 1 of PA 13-247 to DSS to be used to support the fiscal and operational needs of the CTF through June 30, 2014.
- ii. DSS shall, in advance of each calendar quarter, submit to OEC a transfer invoice (TI) for one-quarter of the state and federal funds designated to support the programs and contracts operated by the CTF that were subject to Section 1 of PA 13-247 appropriated to the OEC. Total funds - \$11,671,218.00 (\$2,917,804.50 per quarter)
- iii. Upon receipt of the TI but contingent upon OEC's receipt from the Office of Policy and Management of the quarterly allotment of the state and federal funds designated to support the CTF, OEC shall process the TI.
- iv. DSS shall, within fifteen (15) days of the close of each calendar quarter, report to OEC on state expenditures by CTF during the quarter.
- v. DSS shall, no later than July 31 of each year, report and return to OEC any funds transferred from OEC to DSS through this agreement that were unexpended during the preceding fiscal year.
- vi. During the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, DSS shall continue to manage and maintain all federal and state appropriated funds related to Care for Kids (C4K) program and shall continue to manage the C4K program. However, as the C4K program shall transfer to the OEC, DSS agrees that they shall not make any operational changes or changes in policy related to C4K funding and programs without the prior approval of OEC.

IV. LIAISONS.

- a. Exhibit A to this agreement identifies the DSS program and fiscal staff that are designated to serve as points of contact for OEC and the appropriate contacts at OEC for DSS during the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.
- b. The parties agree to inform each other promptly of any changes in the designation of contacts.
- c. The parties agree that changes in designation shall not require an amendment to this agreement.

V. OEC AGENCY CULTURE BUILDING ACTIVITIES.

- a. All staff involved in the early childhood programs (C4K; CTF) that remain with DSS during the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014 shall, at mutually agreeable times, participate in a minimum of six and a maximum of eight culture-building activities initiated by OEC. These activities may include staff meetings, workshops and discussion sessions.

VI. INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND DATABASES.

- a. DSS shall transfer, as necessary, all computer technology including databases, software and software licenses used by staff administering and operating the programs directly related to the funding by appropriations to the OEC pursuant to Public Act 13-247.
- b. DSS shall transfer all technology support contracts and other contracts related to the upkeep and service for the above mentioned software to OEC.
- c. Databases and information systems that support the programs transferred to the OEC pursuant to Public Act 13-147 will retain continued support from DSS or its contractors until such time that OEC staff is able to access and utilize necessary information and contracts are transferred to the OEC.

VII. FEDERAL GRANTS AND REPORTING.

- a. As the designated lead agency for the Childcare and Development Fund (CCDF) for federal fiscal year 2013 (October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013), DSS remains obligated to complete and file certain CCDF reports. To assist DSS in completing such filings, OEC shall for the period July 1, 2013 – September 30, 2013:
 - i. Provide DSS with expenditure reports on the Chats A course, School Readiness and Background Check programs;

- ii. Provide DSS with reports on personnel and fringe costs; and
 - iii. Shall provide such reports in a form and according to a schedule that is set by DSS fiscal staff and agreed to by OEC.
- b. Following the designation of OEC as the lead CCDF agency OEC shall report to DSS on the following so that DSS may complete its TANF claiming. OEC shall:
 - i. Report expenditures claimed as CCDF Maintenance of Effort within thirty (30) days after the close of the quarter; and
 - ii. Report Child Care subsidy (C4K) expenditures by the three major priority groups (TFA; Transitional and Non-TFA).
- c. For the period ending September 30, 2013, DSS shall, for purposes of the CCDF federal report, continue to document the reinvestment of funds collected by the Department of Administrative Services Financial Collection Services unit from former C4K clients who received overpayments or improper payments by offsetting expenditures claimed by the amount of such collections. For subsequent reporting periods, OEC shall monitor such collections directly and follow similar reporting processes.
- d. After consultation with or as directed by OEC, DSS shall prepare and submit federal grant applications that are specifically related to Childcare Program and Services and the Children's Trust Fund. DSS shall maintain responsibility for the preparation and submission of federal reports associated with the federal grants through December 31, 2014.

VIII. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING.

- a. DSS shall continue to manage state programs including development and facilitation of any Requests for Proposals, contracts, and public hearings.
- b. DSS shall prepare and submit any and all state or other program reports and shall respond to the mandates and requirements of the funding sources.

IX. OEC RESPONSIBILITIES. OEC shall:

- a. Designate in Exhibit A to this agreement a contact person at OEC who shall serve as a liaison to DSS.
- b. Provide a minimum of six and maximum of eight culture-building activities.
- c. Execute, as necessary, any contracts and MOAs necessary to transition the relevant programs to the OEC.

X. MICELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

- a. **Amendments.** Revisions to the MOA's objectives, services, or plan including revisions to due dates for reports and completion of objectives or services, must be approved in writing by both parties. A formal amendment, in writing, shall not be effective until executed by both parties to the agreement, and shall be required for extensions to the final date of the agreement period, and any other agreement revision determined material by the parties.
- b. **Maintenance of Separate Records.** DSS shall maintain records in a manner that will enable the OEC to easily audit and examine any books, documents, papers and other records maintained in support of the contract. All such documents shall be made available to OEC at its request, in conformance with relevant state and federal laws and regulations, and shall be clearly identifiable as pertaining to the MOA. Similarly, if the OEC is in possession of any records necessary for DSS to complete the responsibilities outlined in this MOA, it shall make those documents available upon request.
- c. **Examination of Records.** The OEC and its duly authorized representatives during the contract period and for a period of five (5) years after the completion of the term of this contract shall have access to and the right to examine any of DSS' books, records, documents and papers pertinent to this MOA for the purpose of making audit, examination, excerpts and transcriptions.
- d. **Settlement of Disputes.** Any dispute concerning a question of fact arising under the MOA, which is not disposed of by agreement, shall be decided by the Executive Director of the OEC and the Commissioner of DSS. Pending final resolution of a dispute, both parties shall proceed diligently with the performance of the MOA in accordance with duties outlined herein.
- e. **Cancellation Clause.** This MOA shall remain in full force and effect for the entire term of the agreement period stated above unless canceled by either party, with thirty (30) days written notice to the other. Either party has the right to cancel this agreement without prior notice when either party deems the health or welfare of its service recipients are endangered or the funding for the agreement is no longer available.

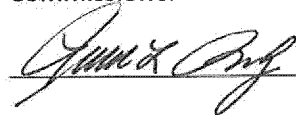
- f. Statutory Authority. The statutory authority for the DSS to enter into this agreement is Conn. Gen. Stat. Sections 4-8, 17b-3. The OEC is authorized to enter into this MOA pursuant to Executive Order #35.
- g. Nondiscrimination. The provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 4a-60 concerning nondiscrimination, as amended by Public Acts 91-58 and 91-407 are incorporated herein by reference.

XI. APPROVALS AND ACCEPTANCES.

FOR:

THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES

Roderick L. Bremby
Commissioner

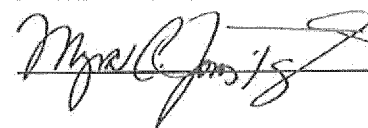


10/2/2013
Date

FOR:

THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Myra Jones-Taylor
Executive Director



9/25/2013
Date

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
AND
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Exhibit A

The following is a list of designated points of contact. These representatives of the parties should be the first contacts regarding any questions and problems that arise during implementation and operation of this agreement.

For DSS:

Program Contact: Peter Palermino, Program Manager
(860) 424-5006
Peter.palermino@ct.gov

Fiscal Contact:

Mike Gilbert, Assistant Director
Division of Financial Management & Analysis
(860) 424-4851
Mike.gilbert@ct.gov

For OEC:

Financial and Reporting Contact: Gary Pescosolido
Fiscal Administrative Manager II, SDE
(860) 713-6667
Gary.pescosolido@ct.gov

Program Reporting Contact: Linda Goodman
Deputy Director for Office of Early Childhood
(860) 713-6781
Linda.goodman@ct.gov

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES,
AND
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between the Department of Developmental Services (hereinafter “DDS”) and the Office of Early Childhood (hereinafter “OEC”).

WHEREAS, Public Act 13-247 merged early childhood programs from various agencies into the OEC for optimal provision of programs and services for families and children; and
WHEREAS, the Birth to Three program will remain with DDS until at least June 30, 2014 pending the outcome of a feasibility study;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Governor Malloy’s Executive Order #35, the OEC has been authorized to enter into agreements as necessary to define transitional and programmatic relationships; and

WHEREAS, DDS and OEC mutually desire clarification of the nature and scope of the roles and the responsibilities of each agency;

NOW, THEREFORE, DDS and OEC agree to the following terms and conditions:

I. PURPOSE: The purpose of this MOU is to define the relationship and the partnership between the OEC and DDS in order to address the following goals:

- The completion of the feasibility study required in Section 3g of Executive Order #35 and submission to the Governor and the Appropriations Committee of the General Assembly by January 1, 2014.
- Identifying a framework for collaboration between the OEC and DDS during Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14).

DDS and OEC will collaborate on the following activities:

1. Manage, oversee and guide a study of the feasibility of moving the Birth to Three program (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)) from the Department of Developmental Services to the Office of Early Childhood by July 1, 2014. The study will be performed by an impartial organization or consultant and presented to the Governor and the Appropriations Committee not later than January 1, 2014. At a minimum, the study shall examine a) what fiscal support the OEC or the Office of Policy and Management might be able to offer to the Birth to Three program; b) whether or not the OEC can implement and manage and the federal Medicaid reimbursement process; c) whether or not moving the Birth to Three program to the OEC will enhance outcomes for Connecticut’s children; d) the necessary timeframe for a successful change of lead agency; and e) the probable timeframe for a physical move for program staff. The study will include interviews with national experts in Part C of IDEA and experts from other states.

2. Incorporate one Birth to Three staff member on loan from DDS into the structure of the OEC and include other Birth to Three staff in ongoing leadership and team-building activities in the OEC.

II. PROJECT DURATION: This Agreement shall become effective upon its execution by both parties, and shall expire on January 31, 2014.

III. DDS RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. **Personnel.** The Director of the Birth to Three System shall be temporarily assigned to the OEC to assist the agency in its first year of operation. The Director will serve as the OEC's point of contact in DDS and will specifically assist in the pending transfer of the federally funded home visiting program from the Department of Public Health to the OEC in July, 2014 and with the management of Connecticut's next Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application. The position will continue to report to the Commissioner of Developmental Services and will also report to the Executive Director of the OEC for the duration of this agreement. The Director's Performance Assessment and Recognition goals for FY14 will be developed with input from both the Executive Director of the OEC and the Commissioner of DDS. The Director will continue to access state cars, mileage reimbursement, and any out-of-state travel reimbursement through DDS. The Director will attend biweekly staff meetings of the Birth to Three staff and bimonthly meetings of the Birth to Three Interagency Coordinating Council.
2. **OEC Agency Culture Building Activities.** Birth to Three staff shall participate in minimum of six and maximum of eight culture building activities initiated by OEC. These activities may include staff meetings, workshops and discussion sessions. The Assistant Director for the Birth to Three program shall participate in weekly OEC Leadership Team meetings. Regardless of whether or not the Birth to Three System is transferred to the OEC, it will be beneficial for early childhood personnel from the Birth to Three program to work collaboratively with OEC staff.
3. **Feasibility Study.** DDS will work collaboratively with the OEC on the completion of the required study regarding the feasibility of moving the Birth to Three program from DDS to the OEC.

IV. OEC RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The OEC shall provide a minimum of six and maximum of eight culture building activities and conduct weekly leadership team meetings.

2. The OEC shall arrange for furnished office space, a computer, a telephone, and parking for the Director of the Birth to Three program at the OEC's offices in the State Office Building for the duration of this agreement.
3. The OEC shall oversee the completion of the feasibility study and be responsible for the funding and selection of an appropriate contractor to conduct such study.

V. MICELLANEOUS PROVISIONS:


1. AMENDMENTS. Revisions to the MOU's objectives, services, or plan including revisions to due dates for reports and completion of objectives or services, must be approved in writing by both parties. A formal amendment, in writing, shall not be effective until executed by both parties to the agreement, and shall be required for extensions to the final date of the agreement period, and any other agreement revision determined material by the parties.
2. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES. Any dispute concerning a question of fact arising under the MOU, which is not disposed of by agreement, shall be decided by the Executive Director of the OEC and the Commissioner of DDS. Pending final resolution of a dispute, both parties shall proceed with the performance of the MOU in accordance with duties outlined herein.
3. CANCELLATION CLAUSE. This MOU shall remain in full force and effect for the entire term of the agreement period stated above unless canceled by either party, with thirty (30) days written notice to the other party. Either party has the right to cancel this agreement without prior notice when either party deems the health or welfare of its service recipients are endangered or the funding for the agreement is no longer available.
4. STATUTORY AUTHORITY. The statutory authority for the DDS to enter into this agreement is Sections 4-8 and 17a-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The OEC is authorized to enter into this MOU pursuant to Governor Malloy's Executive Order #35.
5. NONDISCRIMINATION. The provisions of Sections 4a-60 and 4a-60a of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning nondiscrimination are incorporated herein by reference.

VI. APPROVALS AND ACCEPATANCES:

FOR:
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL
SERVICES
Commissioner Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.


Date

FOR:
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
Executive Director, Myra Jones-Taylor


Date 07.24.13



**Department of Public Health
Contracts & Grants Management Section
410 Capitol Avenue, MS#13GCT
PO Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134-0308
Telephone: (860) 509-7704 FAX: (860) 509-8210**

October 1, 2013

Mara Siladi
Early Childhood Implementation Team
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capital Avenue, Room 343
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: DPH Contract Log #2014-0088
Contract for: MIECHV
Contract Period: September 6, 2013 - October 1, 2014
Award Maximum: \$0.00

Dear Ms. Siladi:

The above referenced Contract has been approved. A copy of the fully executed Contract is enclosed. You must reference the DPH Log #2014-0088 when you submit reports and/or correspondence.

If you have contractual questions, please contact me at (860) 509-7667. Programmatic questions should be directed to Shawn L. Rutchick at (860) 509-7471.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Nadine Tulloch
CT DPH Contract Specialist

cc: Shawn L. Rutchick

Mara.Siladi@ct.gov

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
AND
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between the State Department of Public Health (hereinafter "DPH") and the Office of Early Childhood (hereinafter "OEC").

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, through sections 1 and 50 of Public Act ("PA") 13-247 and sections 1 and 53 of PA 13-184, created the OEC, and transferring the appropriations for programming and staff from various state agencies, including the DPH's Child Day Care and Youth Camp Licensing Programs and the Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program federal grants, to the OEC as recommended in the plan for a coordinated system, developed pursuant to PA 11-181, for optimal provision of programs and services for families and children; and

WHEREAS, Child Care and Youth Camp Licensing programs will remain part of the DPH until June 30, 2014; and the MIECHV Program grants will also remain part of the DPH until SFY 2015 in accordance with guidelines and approval of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Health Resources and Services Administration ("HRSA");

WHEREAS, pursuant to Executive Order #35, the OEC has been authorized to enter into such memoranda of agreement as necessary to define transitional and programmatic relationships; and

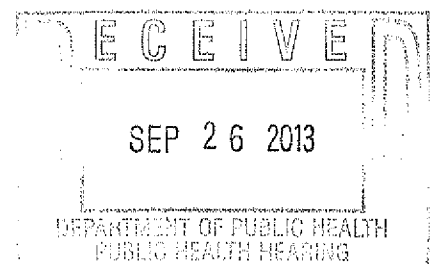
WHEREAS, pursuant to Executive Order #35, the DPH has been directed to collaborate and cooperate with the OEC and enter into such memoranda of agreement as are necessary for the administration of the coordinated system and for the transition and transfer of staff and responsibilities related to the administration of programs transferred to the OEC pursuant to PA 13-247, and PA 13-184; and

WHEREAS, DPH and OEC mutually desire clarification of the nature and scope of the roles and the responsibilities of each agency regarding early childhood programs and services.

NOW, THEREFORE, DPH and OEC agree to the following terms and conditions:

- I. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to define the relationship and the partnership between the Office of Early Childhood and Department of Public Health in order to define the responsibilities of both parties in the transition period as certain DPH staff and programs transition and transfer into the OEC.
- II. TERM:** This Agreement will begin on September 6, 2013 and will terminate on October 1, 2014.

**FULLY
EXECUTED**



III. TRANSITIONAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE CHILD CARE AND YOUTH CAMP LICENSING PROGRAMS AND MIECHV PROGRAMS GRANTS.

A. DPH and OEC will collaborate on the following activities:

1. Facilitating the transfer of the oversight of the Child Care and Youth Camp Licensing programs according to the guidelines set forth in Conn. Gen. Stat. Sections 19a-77 through 19-87e and 19a-420 through 19a-429.
2. Participate in ongoing discussions regarding the administration of the MIECHV Program grants and related activities as defined in each grant award and according to the guidelines set forth in the Social Security Act, Title V, § 511 (42 U.S.C. §711), as added by §2951 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-148).
3. Should a new funding under the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program be made available before the change of grantee occurs for the current MIECHV Program grants, the DPH will submit grant applications on behalf of the State of Connecticut.
4. The submission of legislative proposals during the 2014 legislative session on proposals impacting the child care and youth camp licensing programs.
5. Drafting regulatory revisions pertaining to the Child Care and Youth Camp licensing programs.
6. DPH will continue to keep OEC apprised of any significant personnel decisions.

IV. DPH RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CHILD CARE AND YOUTH CAMP LICENSING PROGRAMS AND MIECHV GRANTS PROGRAM

A. Name a contact persons:

Childcare Licensing and Youth Camp Programs:

Debra Johnson
Connecticut Department of Public Health
410 Capitol Avenue, MS #12 CBR
PO Box 340308
Hartford, CT 06134-0308
(860) 509-7578

MIECHV Grants Programs:

Rosa Biaggi
Connecticut Department of Public Health
410 Capitol Avenue, MS #11 MAT
PO Box 340308
Hartford, CT 06134-0308
(860) 509-7773

B. Fiscal/Program Responsibilities.

1. Discuss with OEC contracts in effect and by mutual agreement take appropriate steps, including amending any active contracts that are in effect, related to the OEC in order to transfer contracts that are necessary to the continuity of work to the OEC on or before July 1, 2014;
2. All vendors providing services funded by appropriations that were transferred to the Office of Early Childhood will be notified of the change in lead agency and be provided with a single point of contact.
3. All payments required to be made within the fiscal year will be processed prior to June 30, 2014.
4. Contracts related to Child Care/Youth Camp Licensing Program and MIECHV Programs grants will continue to be processed according to procedures set forth in DPH.
5. DPH shall process all required payments pursuant to its contracts within the fiscal year and prior to June 30, 2014. DPH will continue to comply with all fiscal responsibilities related to the Child Care and Youth Camp Licensing Programs.
6. DPH will continue to manage programmatic and fiscal responsibilities, contract monitoring and federal reporting associated with the MIECHV programs grants.
7. DPH will continue to comply with the requirements of the MIECHV Program grants, including the obligation to relinquish the grants if responsibility for the subject matter of the grants is statutorily transferred to OEC, until its obligations thereunder are extinguished. If OEC desires to continue the contractual relationship with the MIECHV Program grants contractors, it will so advise DPH which will work with OEC to achieve such a transfer.
8. DPH will submit final expenditures to HRSA within HRSA's defined timeline allowing contractors 90 days to submit final contract expenditures.

C. Personnel.

1. Licensing Section Chief and staff working with the Child Care and Youth Camp Licensing Programs will remain in DPH through the duration of this transition period.
2. The MIECHV Program funded staff will remain in DPH until the reconciliation required under the federal grants occurs.

D. OEC Agency Culture Building Activities.

1. Staff assigned to the Child Care and Youth Camp Licensing Programs will participate in Culture Building activities initiated by OEC at a frequency mutually agreed to by DPH and OEC. These may include staff meetings, workshops and discussion sessions. In addition, the

Section Chief will attend regularly scheduled leadership meetings for a minimum of once a month and maximum of once a week.

2. Staff assigned to the MIECHV Program Grants will participate in Culture Building activities initiated by OEC at a frequency mutually agreed to by DPH and OEC until the reconciliation of the federal grants occurs. These may include staff meetings, workshops and discussion sessions. Scheduling should occur in collaboration with staff to minimize the disruption of services.

E. Information Systems and Databases.

1. Discuss the details to follow in an addendum to this MOU with SDE Bureau of Information Technology (BIT) as the IT APO for OEC, all staff computer technology equipment, support and related applications including software, software licenses related to the Child Day Care and Youth Camp Licensing Programs and the MIECHV Program grants to be transferred to OEC.
2. DPH will provide training and Information Technology knowledge transfer to BIT/OEC IT staff in how to operate and troubleshoot software systems, and generate reports from such software systems that are scheduled to be transferred to the OEC.
3. SDE and OEC will not incur any licensing or support costs for E-Licensing or any other data systems or IT support or associated support costs for OEC staff at DPH facilities until the detailed addendum of IT services to this MOU is agreed upon by all parties

F. Federal Grants.

1. Prepare and submit required reporting until such time that the Department of Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) approves the DPH's petition to relinquish the MIECHV Program grants.
2. Prepare requests to HRSA in order to follow Federal guidelines in transitioning the fiduciary responsibilities related to the MIECHV Program grants from DPH to OEC.
3. The DPH will provide the OEC a Letter of Support where required for the submission of their MIECHV Program grants applications to HRSA. The OEC will commit to meeting the HRSA requirements related to the grants and maintain the focus of health for pregnant women, infants and children as required by the grants.
4. Should a new funding cycle be made available under the MIECHV Program grants or an extension of the current grants be possible, DPH will submit an application on behalf of the State of Connecticut until responsibilities associated with being the grantee are relinquished.

G. Program Management and Reporting.

1. Continue to manage state programs including dissemination of Requests for Proposals, contracts, and public hearings.

2. Prepare and submit all state and other program reports and respond to mandates and requirements.

H. Assets Management.

DPH will identify the computers, printers, filing cabinets, and fax machines that may be transferred to the OEC at a date to be determined. On such date, DPH will electronically transfer those items to the OEC through the Core CT asset management system, where applicable. OEC will be responsible for the physical transfer of the equipment.

I. Transfer of Costs.

If DPH staff are reassigned to the OEC, but they do not physically leave DPH until after the official reassignment date, costs associated with work related expenses for OEC employees, while located at DPH after such reassignment date will be calculated by the DPH Fiscal Office. A State transfer invoice and details of the costs will be prepared by DPH and sent to OEC for reimbursement purposes. In addition, if such situation occurs, DPH and OEC will collaborate to enter into a memorandum of agreement regarding such expenses.

V. OEC RESPONSIBILITIES.

A. Name a contact staff:

Linda Goodman
Deputy Director
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
860-713-6781
Linda.goodman@ct.gov

B. PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

1. OEC staff will participate in meaningful exchanges with DPH staff concerning the child care and youth camp licensing programs and activities to effectuate a smooth transition. These activities will occur at a frequency mutually agreed to by DPH and OEC and may include face-to-face meetings, on-site visits to child care and youth camp facilities, and a review of DPH written materials
2. OEC staff will participate in monthly HRSA calls, technical assistance opportunities, and federal site visits, as permitted by HRSA.
3. OEC staff will participate in the quarterly MCH Advisory Committee Meetings.
4. OEC staff will participate in the Medical Home Advisory Committee for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs.
5. OEC staff will participate in the Home Visiting Advisory Committee.

VI. MICELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

A. AMENDMENTS.

1. The parties understand that factors such as, among others, legislative enactments affecting the programs described herein, may render an amendment to this Agreement desirable or necessary.
2. If such legislation occurs, the parties agree to work together to agree upon appropriate amendments hereto.
3. Such revisions and any other revision to the Agreement's objectives, services, or plan including revisions to due dates for reports and completion of objectives or services, must be approved in writing by both parties. A formal amendment, in writing, shall not be effective until executed by both parties to the agreement, and shall be required for extensions to the final date of the agreement period, and any other agreement revision determined material by the parties.

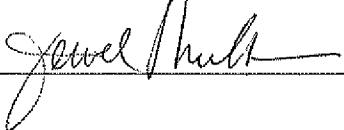
B. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES. Any dispute concerning a question of fact arising under the MOU, which is not disposed of by agreement, shall be decided by the Executive Director of the OEC and the Commissioner of DPH. Pending final resolution of a dispute, both parties shall proceed diligently with the performance of the MOU in accordance with duties outlined herein.

C. CANCELLATION CLAUSE. This MOU shall remain in full force and effect for the entire term of the agreement period stated above unless canceled either party, with thirty (30) days written notice to the other. Either party has the right to cancel this agreement without prior notice when either party deems the health or welfare of its service recipients are endangered or the funding for the agreement is no longer available.

D. ADDITIONAL MEMORANDA. The parties understand that additional memoranda may be desirable or necessary to address additional issues involving the transfer of the programs from DPH to OEC that are not specifically addressed herein. As such issues requiring such memoranda are identified the parties agree to work to develop and enter into such additional memoranda.


FOR:
THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

Commissioner Jewel Mullen MD, MPH, MPA

 10/1/2013
Date

FOR:
THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Executive Director, Myra Jones-Taylor

 9.20.13
Date

Connecticut Early Childhood Parent Outreach Initiative

A Summary of Responses

A Report from the Early Childhood Planning Team

Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor, Director

Introduction and Process

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Planning (OECF) spent several months engaging in a parent outreach initiative that included surveys to which more than 3,000 (3,329) parents responded and six parent forums, which a total of approximately 200 parents attended. This report entails a cumulative summary of our findings.

The OECF owes a debt of gratitude to United Way of Connecticut 2-11, the William Caspar Graustein Foundation, and the Early Childhood Alliance for their help in distributing and promoting the survey. Although several organizations helped to formally publicize the parent survey, Connecticut's early childhood community rose to the occasion and most participants heard about the survey through word of mouth.

The OECF also owes a debt of gratitude to the Connecticut Commission on Children, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative and the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet, for their help in organizing and hosting the community parent forums. At each forum, participants were divided into small groups, with each group staffed by a facilitator and a recorder. The facilitators guided the discussions with a list of questions carefully developed by the Commission on Children, with input from parent and early-care leaders.

Demographics

In launching the parent outreach initiative, the OECF attempted to cover a demographic that reflected Connecticut's racial, geographic and socio-economic diversity. To that end, the OECF held forums in towns that were representative of Connecticut's urban, suburban and rural communities. Spanish-speaking facilitators were also available at every forum, while Arabic and Polish facilitators were available at some. In the case that forums were cancelled due to inclement weather, CT Parent Power and the Commission on Children solicited written responses from parents. In addition, publicity for both the parent outreach forum and the parent surveys was conducted in both English and Spanish.

The parent survey, which had versions in both English and Spanish, was available on-line and was distributed through a variety of organizations, including early childhood programs, schools, and homeless shelters.

Of the parents who responded to the survey, about half (47%) self-identified as being other than White/Caucasian with 24% identifying themselves as Hispanic/Latino and 20% as Black or African American. Sixty-five percent (65%) came from households of at least four people. Forty five (45%) had a household income of less than \$35,000 with 29% of those households with incomes under \$20,000. Thirty three percent (33%) reported having incomes over \$80,000.

OECF Parent Forum Discussion Questions

What do you wish for your child in his or her first eight years?

If you were the Governor or the Mayor, what kinds of programs would you make sure were available and of really high quality for young children? Why?

What would you improve in your community? Why? What would you expand because it is excellent?

Are there challenges with getting to programs or getting into a program?

What kind of quality is in the programs you bring your children to? How can you tell if a program is good? What do you look for in a good child care program?

What does a parent-friendly set of services look like to you?

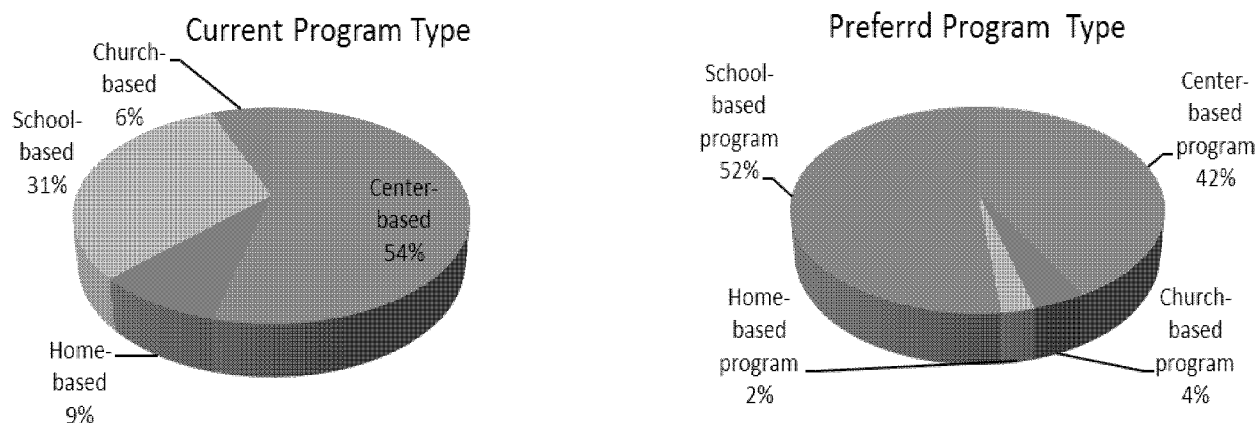
What services and programs would you like to see sewn together so you do not have to go to different locations or meet with several people?

Do you have good choices for your childcare?

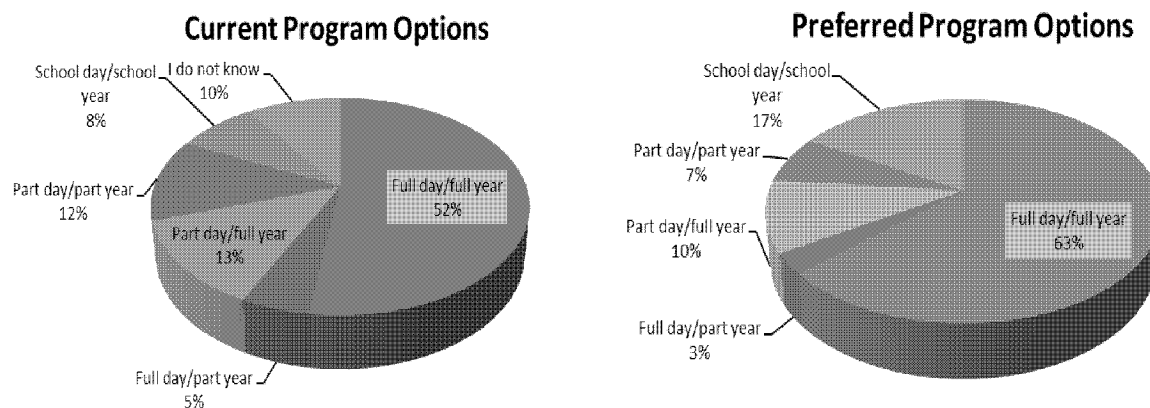
Additionally, responses included the ages of the children in the family. Twenty one percent (21%) had at least one child that was 0-2; 54% of the respondents had at least one child that was 3-5 and 25% had children in both age groups. They had a cumulative 3,527 young children in their households, with 1,294 infants and toddlers and 2,233 preschool age children. Although surveyed parents reported having up to five young children in their households, most had one or two young children with the average household size being six people.

The Need in Early Childhood

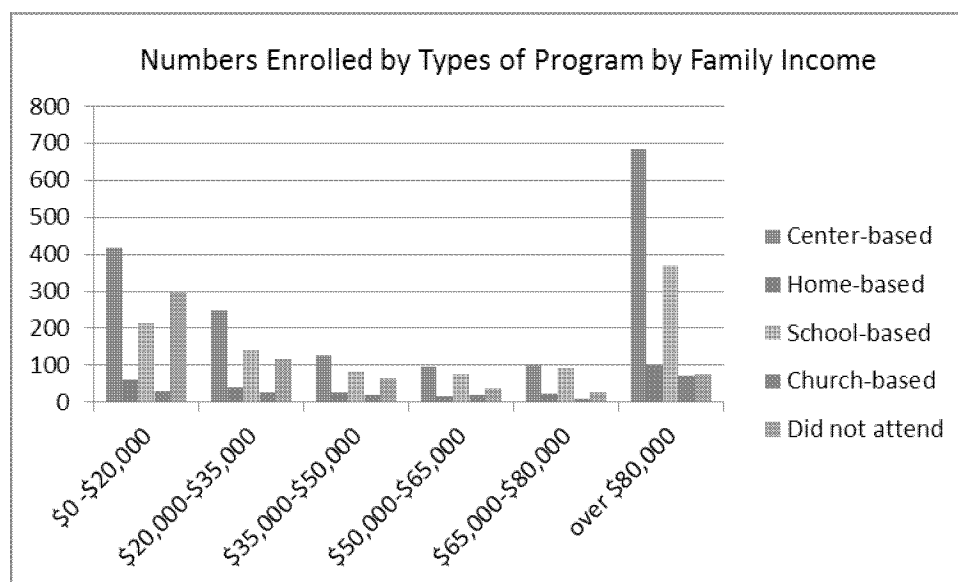
One thing is clear from the parent outreach initiative: the needs and wants of many parents of young children are not being met in Connecticut. While we must consider the demographics of the respondents, the majority of parents seek full day/full year programs that are school-based or in centers and located in their towns. However, the availability of programs that meet all three criteria is limited. As shown below, the distribution of program types in which parents enroll their children differs from the distribution of programs in which parents would prefer to enroll their children.



Additionally, when asking about current program option for length of day and year and preferred program option, it appears that some families are in program options because this is what is available to them, but not necessarily their first choice. For example, a number of parents would prefer the school day/school year option even though their children are currently enrolled in full day/full year programs. Sixty three (63%) of the parents would prefer full day/full year versus the 52% that currently have it and 17% would prefer school day/school year as opposed to the 8% that currently have that option. Below are graphs that show the differences in overall current versus preferred program options.



Of particular note with a comparable sample size is the number of children enrolled in program types by income. Over four hundred children in families with incomes under \$35,000 did not attend a program compared to only 76 children who did not attend a program in families with reported incomes of over \$80,000. This data may suggest that those families with lower incomes have more limited access to early care and education programs.



Moreover, parents are straining their budgets to pay for costly early childhood care and are either unaware of or eligible for early childhood subsidy programs. Surveyed parents and forum participants identified and discussed current hindrances to an effective early childhood system in Connecticut that would allow them to access the services they need to support their children's development birth through age five. Common themes in the discussions included: access to quality programs, cost of programs, and access to information about early childhood.

Access to Quality Programs

When asked to rank the relative importance of certain characteristics of early childhood programs 1-5 (with 1 being of least importance, 3 being of middling importance, and 5 being of utmost importance), 76% of parents said that the quality of education was most important in selecting a program. Almost as many parents (71%) cited social development as most important. More than 60% of parents cited the following factors as having middling to high importance in their selection of an early childhood program: fee, location, and supportive services such as parent education and nutrition.

Unfortunately, the availability of programs that have such characteristics is limited. Both parents who attended the forum or responded to the survey overwhelmingly cited a need for the increased availability of quality programs that fit their children's and families' needs. In New London, parents described long waiting lists for the high-quality programs in their town. Other parents were concerned that their children were not in the best program, but they could not afford an alternative.

*We need to build stronger communities without putting a price tag on what really matters for a quality early childhood start. –
New London parent*

Forum participants offered many ideas for increasing the quality of early childhood programs, including: creativity in instruction, enrichment activities, talent development, and more developmentally appropriate presentation of content. A common theme of parent forums was the importance of either a regional or statewide common curriculum for early learning. Parents expressed concern that their children may miss content based on where they live.

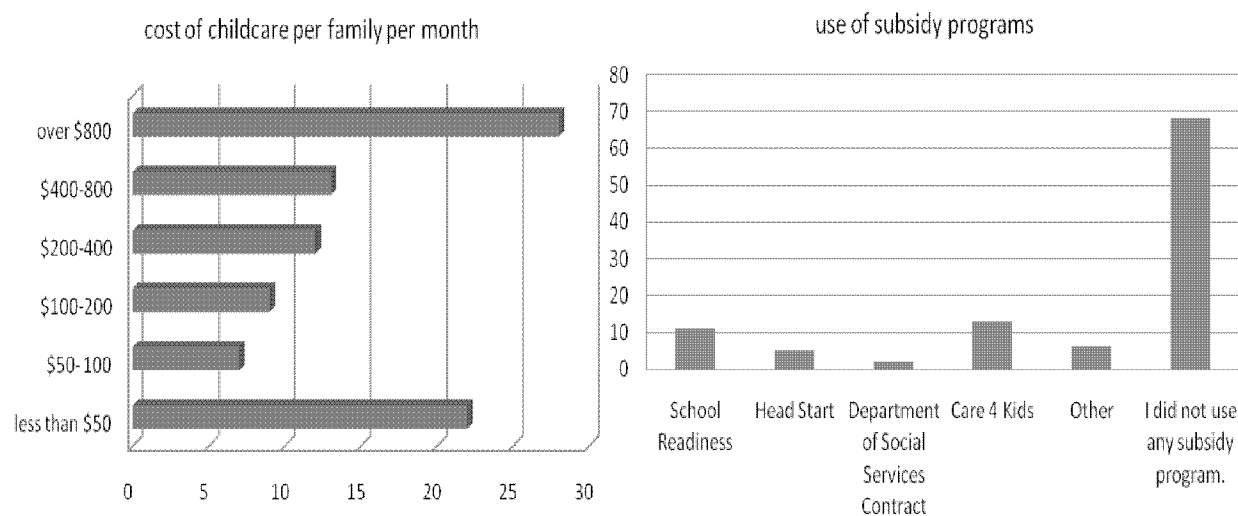
Beyond access to **quality** programs, parents are concerned about adequate access to **any** early childhood learning program. Among the surveyed parents, 10% are currently on a waitlist for an early care or education program, with 18% who had children not enrolled in any early childhood care or education program. Parents who attended the forums reported that they had to compromise their own schedules in order to accommodate those of available child care programs. In New London, parents complained about unclear paper work for free or sliding-scale programs, which made getting their children into programs more difficult. In Norwalk, parents discussed the difficulties of finding child care that fit their schedules. Parents who worked night shifts found it almost impossible to attain care.

Another problem of access is transportation. Families with young children suffer from Connecticut's overall shortage of public transportation, not to mention public transportation that is child-safe and can accommodate car seats. Parents emphasized that expanding early care programs will make no difference if parents can't get to them. Although 67% of surveyed parents enrolled their children in programs located in their towns and 13% enrolled their children in programs located near their workplaces, 11% of parents found it necessary to enroll their children in programs outside of the towns and neighborhoods in which they worked or lived. Some of those parents may have had to budget for lengthier transport or compromise on their work schedules. As one parent said, "we've lost childcare slots because of lack of transportation to and from facilities."

Costs of Programs

Program fees proved to be a significant obstacle to parents seeking early childhood care and education. Parents emphasized the need for financial support from day one and affordable programs for low-income families.

The median cost of early childhood programs to surveyed parents was \$400- \$800 per month, with 28% of parents paying over \$800 per month for services. Despite the expense, only 32% of parents used some sort of government aid to subsidize their costs of early childhood care and education.



Parents described a dilemma with programs like Care 4 Kids, a state-led program to make child care affordable for low-to-moderate income families. Parents urged the state to consider those who earn an income that is too low to afford regular child care but too high to qualify for assistance. As one Hartford parent said honestly, “If your income goes up slightly, you are cut off programs and sometimes the loss of the program is greater than the small increase in your salary; it sets us up to try not to do better in our work.” Another parent said, “I’m scared to get a raise. I might get cut from Care 4 Kids.” Consequently, many parents feel driven to lying about their incomes.

Yet, even some of the parents who receive early childhood subsidies struggle to pay early childhood program fees. For example, parents who work irregular hours struggle with Care 4 Kids’ rules regarding reimbursements for evening or night-time care. Others felt that applications for subsidies were too complicated.

Reasons why families leave early care and education programs confirm the challenges in finding quality services that they want for their children. While 68% of the families reported on the survey that they did not leave a program, those that did cited the following reasons: not satisfied with services (36%), fee too high (36%), inconvenient location (15%) and lack of transportation (11%).

Information and Collaboration

A common refrain among parents was the difficulty of getting quality information about early childhood care and education. “Our community has many resources, but we don’t always know how to access so much information,” a parent in Norwalk said. When asked where they got information about early childhood services and programs, surveyed parents overwhelmingly reported that they went to friends, family members, and the Internet for information, not knowing where else to go. In New Britain, parents said their most frequent source of information about community services was other parents, a tendency that can pose difficulties for those dealing with language barriers. In Killingly, parents expressed a desire for a single hub, where all parents could get the same, accurate information. Parents overwhelmingly expressed a need for information on the supply and quality of early childhood programs.

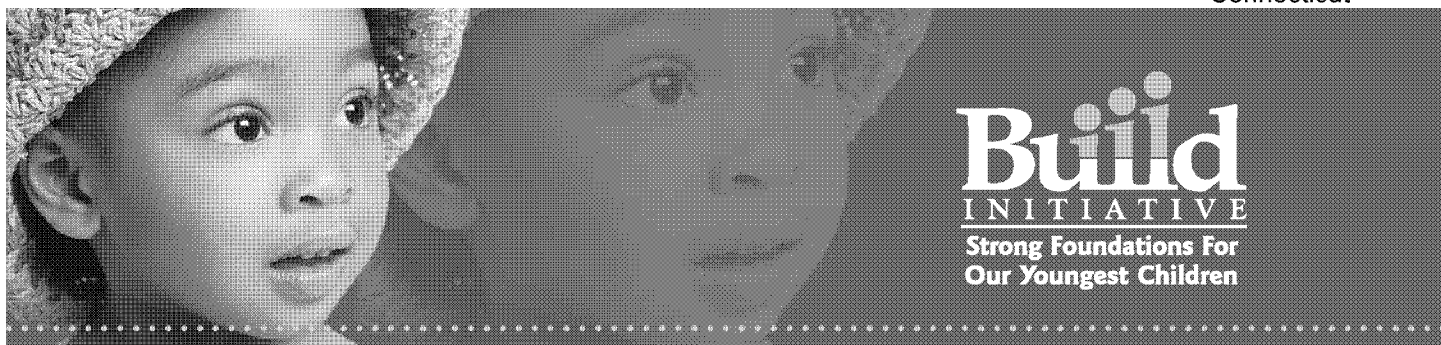
We need a central location for information and financial services that support parents to be able to afford and access quality early childhood programs. –Norwalk parent

Beyond a desire for more information about accessing and paying for programs, parents across the board said they wanted more information about early childhood development. Several parents suggested that programs should offer “parent classes,” where parents could learn how to best support their children at home. Others simply wanted to know how they could be more involved in their children’s school lives. In Norwalk, parents wanted to know what their kids were eating in school so they could supplement necessary nutrition at home. In New London, parents wanted updates on the social climate in early childhood programs so that they could collaborate with teachers and providers on the issue of bullying.

While a majority of parents who responded to the survey preferred a school –based program, many parents in the forums said that even schools who professed to want to partner with parents made them feel unwelcome in practice. Some felt that schools did not make an effort to include parents who could not make school events at traditional hours, while others felt that programs did not value their cultures.

Implications for Policy

The OECP parent outreach initiative clearly conveyed that the current Connecticut early childhood system is not sufficient for the needs of the state’s youngest children and their families. Core themes from parent responses include: better access to quality early childhood programs, increased and more efficient funding, better access to information about both early childhood programs and development, and increased parent involvement. Parents also suggested that access could be increased through a better transportation system and that quality could be improved with a state uniform early childhood curriculum that focused more on enrichment, creativity, and literacy. Last, parents recommended policy that encourages partnerships between parents and the early childhood community.



Build
INITIATIVE
Strong Foundations For
Our Youngest Children

Early Childhood GOVERNANCE

Elliot Regenstein, J.D.
*Senior Vice President
Advocacy and Policy
Ounce of Prevention Fund*

Katherine Lipper, J.D.
*Policy and Legal Advisor
Education Counsel*

I. Introduction

In the United States, more than 60% of all children from birth to age five spend time in the care of someone other than their parents.¹ And child development research, neuroscience, and program evaluation affirm the long-lasting effects that early childhood experiences have on individual and societal outcomes, including school readiness and persistence, economic vitality, workforce preparation, and mental health.² Early education and care services for young children are provided by a wide range of programs with different designs and purposes, including the federal Head Start program, state child care programs that represent a mix of federal and state funds and requirements, and state-funded preschool programs. Building comprehensive early childhood systems focuses on these early care and education services and all the other programs and services necessary for healthy child development and learning including family support, early intervention, and child health and mental health. States have increasingly

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In the United States, more than 60% of all children from birth to age five spend time in the care of someone other than their parents.

sought to develop new governance structures that align authority and oversight of early childhood systems.³

A state system of early childhood programs and services can exist under several different governance models. Governance “refers to how (often multiple) programs and entities are managed to promote efficiency, excellence and equity. It comprises the traditions, institutions and processes that determine how power is exercised, how constituents are given voice, and how decisions are made on issues of mutual concern.”⁴ An effective model of governance must ensure coordination across policies and services, but current systems of early childhood governance typically are fragmented. Careful and deliberate assessment of a state’s early childhood governance structure is an integral step in reducing fragmentation, uneven quality, and inequity in programs and services.⁵

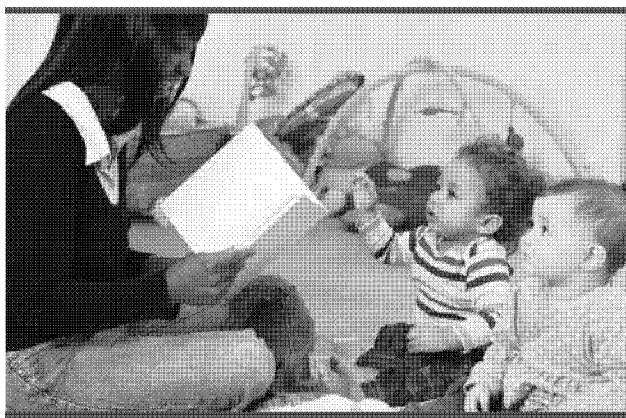
¹ *Infants & Young Children Learning*, Child Trends Data Bank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/?q=node/41> (accessed Sept. 18, 2012).

² See *Building Ready States: A Governor’s Guide to Supporting a Comprehensive, High-Quality Early Childhood State System*, NGA Center for Best Practices, Oct. 2010.

³ The BUILD Initiative and the Early Childhood Systems Working group have defined an early childhood system as a system of systems that encompasses the areas listed. In this paper, however, the term early childhood governance is used loosely. Most early childhood governance reform has occurred in the arena of early care and education.

⁴ See Kagan and Kauerz, *Governing American Early Care and Education* in CONTINUING ISSUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (Feeney, Galper, and Seefeldt, eds., 2009).

⁵ See Goffin, Materla, and Coffman, *Vision to Practice: Setting a New Course for Early Childhood Governance* (Jan. 2011)



This paper provides state policy leaders with a framework to consider and assess early childhood governance options. It examines current state practices, exploring and analyzing the different governance approaches, with a particular focus on states that consolidate programs in the state educational agency. The paper also acknowledges the values and policy choices reflected in each approach and analyzes why a state might choose a certain approach, based on its context and interests. It begins by introducing the concept of governance and the history of early childhood governance before examining three governance structures:

- Coordination among agencies, where administrative authority is vested in multiple agencies that are expected to collaborate with each other;
- Consolidation, in which multiple programs are administered by the same agency, particularly state education agencies; and
- Creation of a new agency focused on early education and care.

The paper then illustrates these three structures with current state examples and practices. Finally, it assesses the advantages and challenges of each governance structure, with recommendations for state leaders on how to determine which governance structure might make the most sense in their states.

II. Governance models

A. Introduction to Governance

1. Conceptual Definition

As noted above, governance refers to the means by which authority and accountability for certain functions is allocated. A governance model places authority within an entity or entities for activities including decisions related to budgeting and managing resources (such as fiscal responsibilities and personnel); management of data; and developing, implementing, and monitoring policies and regulations. Governance similarly necessitates allocation of accountability – for finances, workforce, program quality, and the individual child or student – for an entity or entities.⁶ Ideally, authority and accountability are assigned in an efficient manner to ensure purposeful oversight of the enterprise. Early childhood education governance refers to a state's organizational structure and its placement of authority for making program, policy, financing, and implementation decisions for publicly funded early care and education.

2. History of Governance

Over roughly half a century, the vision for early childhood governance has evolved, reflecting states' deepening understanding of effective practice. Initially, beginning in the 1960s, states focused narrowly on the governance of individual programs; this programmatic approach generally resulted in fragmentation of effort, with little infrastructure or quality control.⁷ Contradictory standards, including conflicting regulatory requirements, led to inefficient results. Next, beginning in the mid-1980s, states began to focus on cooperation and collaboration across services, exploring the use of government cabinets and

⁶ See *Streamlining Government through Early Learning Governance*, The Policy Group for Florida's Families & Children, Feb. 15, 2011; Kagan, *Early Childhood Governance in Florida: Evolving Ideas and Practice* (Final Presentation of the Policy Matters Project), Oct. 2007 (hereinafter "Final Presentation"); *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3.

⁷ See *Vision to Practice*, *supra* note 4; *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5; *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3.

management teams that made recommendations to state leadership and establishing advisory taskforces and councils that often included public and private actors. Generally, however, these partnerships lacked the authority and accountability over core functions to make them true governance models.

Most recently, over the course of the last decade, states increasingly have focused on how to align administrative authority for major programs. This governance shift reflects a desire to achieve greater efficiency, equity, and accountability in delivery of services. It also has corresponded with the rapid growth of early care and education programs, due in part to greater emphasis in federal and state law. These triggers include the creation of P-20 councils, early childhood advisory councils mandated by the federal Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (Head Start Act), and a growing interest in expanding state prekindergarten.

3. Governance Components and Values

An effective early childhood governance model must reflect the comprehensive nature of early childhood services, which includes education programs, child care, health and nutrition, social emotional development, mental health, home visitation, special needs, and early intervention. In establishing a governance model to oversee these functions, the state should consider how best to coordinate and align these areas.

The state also should recognize components of effective governance. For example, the governance model should place authority and accountability within an entity or entities that enjoy legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders.⁸ The entity must have the reputation and standing to receive recognition as the proper manager of the programs

it administers.⁹ Correspondingly, perception of legitimacy must be backed up by ability; the entity must have the required expertise and capability to facilitate the necessary work.¹⁰ Additionally, the state should ensure that the governing entity has access to relevant data to inform accountability and, simultaneously, operates in a transparent manner, providing accessible and understandable information about its efforts.¹¹

Finally, there are a number of cross-cutting values that an early childhood governance model should strive to support. These include the following five values:¹²

- **Coordination:** The governance model should connect the different parts and programs of the early childhood system, reflecting its comprehensive nature.

- **Alignment:** The model should provide coherence across system-wide tasks like data collection, quality standards, and outcome measurement.

- **Sustainability:** The governance model should be able to navigate political and administrative changes and be designed to best account for the breadth of the early childhood system's reach (in terms of programs and services).

- **Efficiency:** The model should allocate resources wisely, reduce duplication of effort, and provide a significant return on investment.

- **Accountability:** The governance model should be accountable to the early childhood system and its stakeholders in terms of quality, equality, and outcomes and also should be able to hold accountable services and programs for their performance.

These values are explored in greater detail in section IV.B. of this paper.

⁸ See *Early Childhood System Governance: Lessons from State Experiences*, The BUILD Initiative, Nov. 2010.

⁹ *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3.

¹⁰ *Early Childhood System Governance*, *supra* note 7.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² See *id.*; *Vision to Practice*, *supra* note 4; *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3.

“The governance model should be accountable to the early childhood system and its stakeholders in terms of quality, equality, and outcomes”

B. Governance Model Options

Early childhood governance, in practice and theory, exists across a spectrum of structures – from coordinated governance (potentially including an explicit leadership role in the governor’s office) to consolidation of authority and accountability in a single agency to creation of an administrative agency focused solely of early childhood services and programs.¹³ The remainder of this section of the paper focuses on these three governance models.

Additionally, within each of these structures, there is room for greater or less decentralization (whereby the state empowers local communities or regions to initiate, implement, and monitor efforts). There also is room within each governance structure for privatization, with the state transferring some responsibility for provision, finances, or regulatory oversight to actors outside of the public sector. These cross-cutting features of governance are not dependent on the administrative structure, and are explored in more detail below.

1. Three Major Models

a. Coordinated Governance

The model of coordinated governance places authority and accountability for early childhood programs and services across multiple public agencies, including through shared operations or shared financing and shared authority for the operations of early learning and development programs. In many states this is the status quo, and states electing to preserve this governance structure sometimes seek to improve coordination and collaboration among the agencies. In some instances those efforts are

formalized through interagency agreements.¹⁴

As one variation of this model, a state’s governor’s office can provide leadership in coordinating governance in the absence of a lead agency. As noted above, historically, many states relied on children’s cabinets or special task forces established by their governors to encourage coordinated early childhood governance;¹⁵ this type of body provides additional, dedicated leadership for early childhood system work. Additionally, states report that more progress is made in early childhood when the governor makes the early childhood system a priority.¹⁶

b. Consolidated Governance

The model of consolidated governance occurs when the state places authority and accountability for the early childhood system in one government agency – for example, the state education agency – for development, implementation, oversight and accountability of multiple early childhood programs and services. When moving to this governance structure, a foundational question for the state will be which agency will be designated as the governing entity. This choice can affect the underlying values and principles of future work.¹⁷

c. Creation of a New Agency

Finally, a state might choose to create a new government agency or entity within an agency that has the authority and accountability for early childhood system. The governing entity thus might be an independent state agency with a single mission focused on early childhood. This type of governance structure requires that the comprehensive set of activities associated with

” When moving to this governance structure, a foundational question for the state will be which agency will be designated as the governing entity.

¹³ See *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5.

¹⁴ Note that some federally funded programs (e.g., Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant program and Part C of IDEA) require interagency planning body. *Building Ready States*, *supra* note 2.

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Early Childhood System Governance*, *supra* note 7.

¹⁷ *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3.

early childhood be associated with the created entity. Generally, these activities would include Head Start collaboration (the state's primary responsibility in the Head Start programs), child care, and prekindergarten and might also include home visitation and oversight for Parts B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

2. Cross-Cutting Issues

Regardless of where along this spectrum of choices a state desires its early childhood governance structure to fall, there are several cross-cutting issues all states should acknowledge. First, nearly all states have formally designated an early childhood advisory council (ECAC) tasked with implementing a strategic plan for comprehensive services statewide. ECACs have been created under the federal mandate of the Head Start Act and with federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). While advisory bodies like the ECACs are not administrative – administrative structures require authority to make and implement policy decisions, not simply give advice -- the emergence and work of the ECACs can serve a complementary role to the state's governance of early childhood, including as state agencies act on the recommendations of the ECAC.¹⁸

Second, within any state governance structure, the state should consider the degree to which regional governance structures can advance its goals for the early childhood system. States might consider decentralization of governance to empower local communities to initiate, implement, and monitor efforts.¹⁹ Regional structures might receive certain authority, including in the allocation of resources, and also might play a role in holding programs and

services accountable for results, and states might find that policies are less controversial when vetted and implemented at the local level. At the same time, states must recognize the potential for inequities in access and quality when decision-making is left to local communities, some of which may lack necessary resources or political will. Regardless of the governance structure selected – coordination, consolidation, or creation – a state might place greater or less emphasis on decentralization depending on its context.

Finally, privatization and public-private relationships can play a role in coordinated, consolidated, or created governance structures. Indeed, due to increasing complexities and costs associated with public programming and shrinking state government budgets, many fields (including early childhood) have experienced greater hybridization of the public and private sectors.²⁰ Public-private partnerships can enhance the sustainability of a governance structure by supporting certain components of the system (e.g., policy analysis, advocacy, communications, public investment, quality improvements and coordination, etc.) and at times can undertake certain roles inappropriate for purely public entities.²¹ At the same time, states must guard against conflicts of interest that could emerge.

²⁰ See *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3.

²¹ See *Background: Public-Private Partnerships, the Ounce*, April 2012; *Early Childhood System Governance*, *supra* note 7.

¹⁸ See generally *Early Childhood System Governance*, *supra* note 7. A complicating factor is that while ECACs are created to be advisory, the ARRA funds require them to administer grant funds for projects selected in 2010 and approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. These grant funds can blur the edges of the ECAC's advisory role.

¹⁹ See *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5.



III. State Practice

A. Introduction

Having introduced the concept, history, and values of governance and explored the spectrum of options states have for governance models (i.e., coordination, consolidation, and creation), this paper now examines current governance choices that states are making.

The state role in early childhood is in many states a comparatively recent development; while the federal Head Start program dates to the 1960s, the federal role in child care primarily emerged in the 1990s, and the development of state preschool accelerated dramatically in the decade between 2000 and 2010.

These programs often emerged in separate agencies, and several of the efforts to consolidate program administration have occurred in the last decade. This includes the standalone agencies created in Georgia, Massachusetts, and Washington; the dual-agency structure created in Pennsylvania; and the consolidation of child care into the state education agency in Maryland and Michigan.



The two primary sources of state funding for early education and care are child care funds and state preschool funds...

In Nebraska, the departments of education and of health and human services co-lead state's early intervention program and, through a memorandum of understanding, also share planning and administration of quality funds from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).²³ Finally, multiple states -- including Illinois, New Mexico, and Wisconsin, all

expected to be Round 2 grantees -- proposed interagency strategies for carrying out their Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTTT-ELC) grant activities (see below).²⁴

As noted above, one formal structure sometimes used to strengthen coordination is the creation of a designated unit within the governor's office responsible for leading collaboration. In Illinois, for example, the governor created a Governor's

Office of Early Childhood Development to coordinate work of the state's ECAC and to support efforts to improve and expand programs and services.²⁵ Ohio's Early Education and Development Office resides within the Governor's Office of 21st Century Education to work with and coordinate the early childhood work of interagency teams and the state's ECAC.²⁶ And in Colorado, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor is a key partner in the state's early childhood efforts, including through a Memorandum of Understanding with the state's human services and education agencies.²⁷

B. State Examples

This section provides brief examples of early childhood governance models in states across the nation, illustrating coordination, consolidation, and creation structures.

1. Coordination

In a number of states, programmatic authority is spread across multiple agencies that are expected to collaborate with each other, often through formal structures. For example, in Connecticut, five state agencies -- the departments of children and families, education, higher education, public health, and social services -- collaborate to gather data on early childhood professionals.²²

2. Consolidation

The two primary sources of state funding for early education and care are child care funds and state preschool funds, which are frequently blended

²³ [ELC draft]

²⁴ [ELC draft]

²⁵ See *State Early Care and Education Public Policy Developments (FY 11)*, Nat'l Assoc. for the Educ. of Young Children, Feb. 2011.

²⁶ [ELC draft]

²⁷ See *State Partners Join Forces for Colorado Children and Families*, Lt. Governor Garcia, <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/LtGovGarcia/CBON/1251630622101> (accessed Sept. 18, 2012).

²² See *Building Ready States*, *supra* note 2.

and braided with federal Head Start funding by individual programs. Three states – California, Maryland, and Michigan – have consolidated child care funds and state preschool into the state education agency.²⁸ In both California and Maryland the state's Head Start collaboration office is also housed within the state education agency.²⁹

In Maryland, the state transferred all early care and education programs to the state educational agency in 2005 and created within the state education agency (SEA) the Division of Early Childhood Development.³⁰ Michigan's new Office of Great Start at the SEA, created by executive order, opened in October 2011 and oversees programs related to the CCDF, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, state prekindergarten, Head Start collaboration, and parent education.³¹ Pennsylvania centralized early childhood care and education programs -- previously governed by both the SEA and the Department of Public Welfare -- in an the Office of Child development and Early Learning at the Department of Public Welfare; the office now coordinates initiatives previously overseen by two separate state agencies.³²

Other states have also taken steps to build the SEA's leadership in early childhood. Minnesota recently formed the Office of Early Learning in its SEA to oversee early childhood work.³³ In fiscal year 2012, state law in Florida established



the Office of Early Learning within the SEA; this new office will administer the state's school readiness system and the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, and also will house and oversee Florida's ECAC.³⁴

3. Creation

Finally, several states have created wholly separate state agencies tasked with authority over the state's early childhood services and programs. One state to go this route is Massachusetts, with state legislation in 2005 that created the Department of Early Education and Care, which has authority over and accountability for early education and care and after-school services for families.³⁵ The creation of the new agency required a reorientation of state resources.³⁶ In Washington, the governor-established State Department of Early Learning serves as a cabinet-level state agency for initiatives previously scattered across several departments.³⁷ And Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning (Bright from the Start) is responsible for the state's early child care and early education.³⁸

²⁸ Several other states place responsibility for child care and state preschool in the same agency but not the state education agency: the Arkansas Department of Human Services, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, and the Vermont Department for Children and Families. In addition, Massachusetts and Washington house both within their standalone early childhood agency.

²⁹ Ten states – Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, and Tennessee – have their Head Start collaboration office in the same agency as state preschool funding, but have a different agency primarily responsible for child care funding.

³⁰ See *Building Ready States*, *supra* note 2; *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5; *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3.

³¹ [ELC draft]

³² See *Building Ready States*, *supra* note 2; *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5; ELC draft; *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 3. See *Annual Report 2010-11*, Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

³³ See *State Early Care and Education Public Policy Developments: Fiscal Year 2012*, Nat'l Assoc. for the Educ. of Young Children, 2012.

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ See *A Case Study of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care*, Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy and Strategies for Children, April 2008.

³⁶ See *Department of Early Education and Care Strategic Plan*, Mass. Dep't of Early Educ. and Care, Feb. 2009; *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5; *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 6.

³⁷ See *Building Ready States*, *supra* note 2. See *DEL Biennial Report to the Legislature and Longitudinal Study Plan*, Washington State Dept. of Early Learning, July 1, 2008.

³⁸ See *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5; *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 6.

C. State Examples of Cross-Cutting Issues

Nearly all states have formally designated an ECAC to oversee comprehensive early childhood services. The state education agency is required by federal law to be a part of the ECAC, but the ECAC plays a purely advisory role. Whatever structure a state chooses, the ECAC will need to find a role where it can contribute to legislative and executive branch decision-making while not overstepping its boundaries as an advisory body.

A number of states have developed regional governance structures to assist with the effective development and delivery of services. For example, Colorado's Local Early Childhood Councils provide a network of local early childhood councils that assist with development of resources and implementation of early childhood initiatives.³⁹ The California Early Learning Challenge grant includes 16 regional consortia with members from districts, the state Children and Families Commission, and other stakeholders to develop and put into effect the state's regional quality rating system for early childhood education providers.⁴⁰ In Florida, 31 early learning coalitions administer CCDF funds, and 11 counties have children's services councils that administer local revenues for children's services.⁴¹ Finally, North Carolina has proposed creating both Transformation Zones to target rural, poor, multiple-risk factor communities, and a Smart Start Leaders Collaborative for local capacity-building.⁴²

Many states also have entered into public-private partnerships, or have supported the creation of a public-private entity, to advance their goals for their early childhood systems. Oregon is using ARRA child care quality funds

to support the first phase of an Education and Quality Investment Partnership, a public-private partnership focused on improving child care quality throughout the state.⁴³ In Washington, state law requires the Departments of Early Learning and Social and Health Services to develop a nongovernmental, public-private initiative to coordinate investments in child development, and Thrive by Five Washington is the state's nonprofit public-private partnership for early learning, assembling business, philanthropic, and government leaders to work on initiatives including family education and home visiting.⁴⁴ And Alaska's Best Beginning supports local partnerships, an imagination library, and public education and awareness.⁴⁵

D. Governance for Specific Federal and State Programs

The following table identifies the entity or entities tasked with oversight and authority of important early childhood programs. Note that each of these programs has separate rules, regulations and reporting requirements.⁴⁶

³⁹ See *Building Ready States*, *supra* note 2.

⁴⁴ See *About Thrive by Five Washington*, Thrive by Five Washington, <http://thrivebyfivewa.org/about/> (accessed Sept. 18, 2012); *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5; *Public-Private; Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 6; *Fiscal Year 2012*, *supra* note 33.

⁴⁵ See *Fiscal Year 2012*, *supra* note 33.

⁴⁶ See *Building an Early Learning System: The ABCs of Planning and Governance Structures*, Build, Dec. 2004.

³⁹ See *Early Childhood Councils*, Early Childhood Colorado Information Clearinghouse, http://earlychildhoodcolorado.org/state_initiatives/councils.cfm (accessed Sept. 18, 2012); *Building Ready States*, *supra* note 2; *Final Presentation*, *supra* note 5; *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 6.

⁴⁰ [ELC draft]

⁴¹ [ELC draft]

⁴² [ELC draft]



State	Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDF)	Head Start Collaboration	State Pre-K	Home Visiting (MIECHV)	Part C (IDEA) (Part B (IDEA) is in the Dep't of Educ.)	RTTT-ELC
Alabama	Dep't of Human Resources	Dep't of Children's Affairs	Dep't of Children's Affairs (Office of School Readiness)	Admin. for Children and Families	Dep't of Rehabilitation Services	Did not apply
Alaska	Dep't of Health & Social Services	Dep't of Educ. & Early Development	Dep't of Educ. & Early Development	Dep't of Health & Social Services	Dep't of Health & Social Services	Did not apply
Arizona	Dep't of Economic Security	Dep't of Educ.	No state-funded program	Dep't of Health Services	Dep't of Economic Security	First Things First
Arkansas	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services, in partnership with Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services
California	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Public Health	Dep't of Developmental Services	Dep't of Educ.
Colorado	Dep't of Human Services	Office of the Governor	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Public Health & Environment	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services
Connecticut	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Public Health	Dep't of Developmental Services	Dep't of Educ.
Delaware	Dep't Health & Social Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Executive Office of the Governor	Dep't of Health & Social Services	Dep't of Educ.
Florida	Office of Early Learning (formerly Agency for Workforce Innovation)	Office of Early Learning	Office of Early Learning, in collaboration with Dep't of Educ. and Dep't of Children and Families	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Health	Office of Early Learning
Georgia	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Early Care & Learning (DECAL)	DECAL	Governor's Office of Planning & Budget	Dep't of Public Health (Office of Children & Youth with Special Needs)	DECAL
Hawaii	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services	No state-funded program	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Human Services
Idaho	Dep't of Health & Welfare	Dep't of Health & Welfare	No state-funded program	Dep't of Health & Welfare	Dep't of Health & Welfare	Did not apply
Illinois	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services	State Bd. of Educ.	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services	State Bd. of Educ.
Indiana	Family & Social Services Admin.	Family & Social Services Admin.	No state-funded program	Dep't of Health	Family & Social Services Admin. (First Steps)	Did not apply

Key:  = SEA oversight  = Oversight includes SEA

State	Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDF)	Head Start Collaboration	State Pre-K	Home Visiting (MIECHV)	Part C (IDEA) (Part B (IDEA) is in the Dep't of Educ.)	RTTT-ELC
Iowa	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Public Health	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.
Kansas	Dep't of Social & Rehabilitation Services	Dep't of Social & Rehabilitation Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Environment	Dep't of Health & Environment	Dep't of Educ.
Kentucky	Dep't for Community Based Services	Governor's Office (Office of Early Childhood)	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't for Public Health (Cabinet for Health & Family Services)	Dep't for Public Health (Cabinet for Health & Family Services)	Governor's Office (Office of Early Childhood)
Louisiana	Dep't of Children & Family Services	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Hospitals	Dep't of Health & Hospitals (Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities)	Did not apply
Maine	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.
Maryland	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Mental Hygiene	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.
Massachusetts	Dep't Early Education & Care	Dep't of Early Educ. & Care	Dep't of Early Educ. and Care	Dep't of Public Health	Dep't of Public Health	Dep't of Early Educ. & Care
Michigan	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Community Health	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.
Minnesota	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.
Mississippi	Dep't of Human Services	Office of the Governor	No state-funded program	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Health (Office of Child & Adolescent Health)	Dep't of Human Services
Missouri	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Elementary & Secondary Education	Dep't of Elementary & Secondary Educ.	Dep't of Health & Senior Services	Dep't of Elementary & Secondary Education	Dep't of Elementary & Secondary Education
Montana	Dep't of Public Health & Human Services	Dep't of Public Health & Human Services	No state-funded program	Dep't of Public Health & Human Services	Dep't of Public Health & Human Services	Did not apply
Nebraska	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services and Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Human Services

Key:  = SEA oversight  = Oversight includes SEA

State	Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDF)	Head Start Collaboration	State Pre-K	Home Visiting (MIECHV)	Part C (IDEA) (Part B (IDEA) is in the Dep't of Educ.)	RTTT-ELC
Nevada	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services and Head Start Collaboration & Early Childhood Systems Office
New Hampshire	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services	No state-funded program	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Did not apply
New Jersey	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Senior Services	Dep't of Health & Senior Services	Dep't of Educ.
New Mexico	Dep't of Children, Youth & Families	Dep't of Children, Youth, & Families	Public Educ. Dep't	Dep't of Children, Youth, & Families	Dep't of Health	Public Educ. Dep't
New York	Office of Children and Family Services	Council on Children & Families	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Health	Office of Children and Family Services
North Carolina	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Public Instruction (Office of Early Learning)	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Early Childhood Advisory, Office of the Governor
North Dakota	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services	No state-funded program	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Human Services	Did not apply
Ohio	Dep't of Job & Family Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Educ.
Oklahoma	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Commerce	Dep't of Educ.	Health Dep't	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.
Oregon	Dep't of Employment	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Human Services/ Oregon Health Authority	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Human Services
Pennsylvania	Dep't of Public Welfare	Dep't of Public Welfare	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Public Welfare	Dep't of Public Welfare (evidently not educ. as well—see RTTP app)	Dep'ts of Educ. & Public Welfare (Office of Child Development & Early Learning)


Key:  = SEA oversight  = Oversight includes SEA

State	Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDF)	Head Start Collaboration	State Pre-K	Home Visiting (MIECHV)	Part C (IDEA) (Part B (IDEA) is in the Dep't of Educ.)	RTTT-ELC
Rhode Island	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Educ.
South Carolina	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Educ. and South Carolina First Steps ⁴⁷	The Children's Trust Fund	South Carolina First Steps	Did not apply
South Dakota	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Educ.	No state- funded program	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Educ.	Did not apply
Tennessee	Dep't of Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Educ.	Did not apply
Texas	Child Care Services, Workforce Development Division, Texas Workforce Commission	The Children's Learning Institute (part of the Texas State Center for Early Childhood Development)	Texas Education Agency	Health & Human Services Commission	Dep't of Assistive & Rehabilitation Services	Did not apply
Utah	Dep't of Workforce Services	Dep't of Workforce Services	No state- funded program	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Health	Did not apply
Vermont	Dep't for Children & Families (Agency of Human Services, Child Development Division)	Dep't for Children & Families	Dep't for Children & Families and Dep't of Educ.	Agency of Human Services	Dep't for Children & Families	Dep't for Children & Families
Virginia	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Social Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services	Did not apply

Key:  = SEA oversight  = Oversight includes SEA

⁴⁷ The Board of South Carolina First Steps is "composed of the Governor and the State Superintendent of Education and twenty appointed members[,] . . . [including] [t]he Chief Executive Officer of each of the following . . . : Dep't of Social Services or his designee; Dep't of Health and Environmental Control or his designee; Dep't of Health and Human Services or his designee; Dep't of Mental Health or his designee; Dep't of Disabilities and Special Needs or his designee; Dep't of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services or his designee; Dep't of Transportation or his designee and Budget and Control Board, Division of Research and Statistics or his designee."

State	Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDF)	Head Start Collaboration	State Pre-K	Home Visiting (MIECHV)	Part C (IDEA) (Part B (IDEA) is in the Dep't of Educ.)	RTTT-ELC
Washington	Dep't of Early Learning	Dep't of Early Learning	Dep't of Early Learning	Dep't of Early Learning	Dep't of Early Learning	Dep't of Early Learning
West Virginia	Dep't of Health and Human Resources	Dep't of Health & Human Services	Dep't of Educ.	Dep't of Health & Human Resources	Dep't of Health & Human Resources	Didn't highlight lead
Wisconsin	Dep't of Children & Families	Dep't of Public Instruction	Dep't of Public Instruction	Dep't of Children & Families	Dep't of Health Services (Children's Services Section)	Dep't of Children & Families
Wyoming	Dep't of Family Services	University of Wyoming/ Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (linked to Dep't of Family Services)	No state-funded program	Dep't of Health	Dep't of Health	Did not apply

Key:  = SEA oversight  = Oversight includes SEA

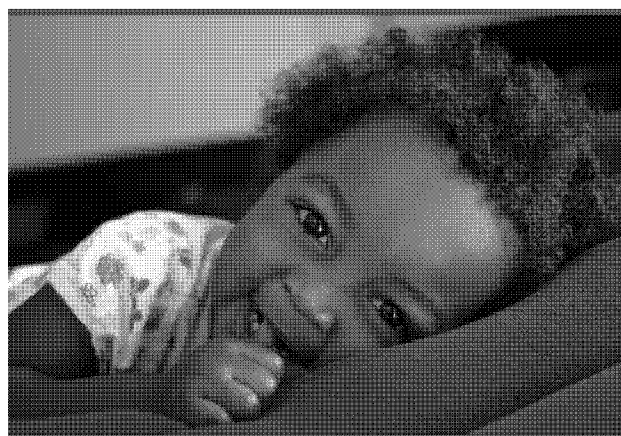
IV. Discussion And Recommendations

As noted previously, for our analysis we interviewed key leaders inside and outside government in several states that have made governance changes or have a consolidated governance structure.⁴⁸ From those interviews and existing literature, we distilled some key principles to inform state decisions, summarized here. We analyze key values that need to be addressed in any structure, identify advantages and disadvantages of particular structures, and note some cross-cutting issues that a state will have to address regardless of which model it chooses.

A. Decision Principles

1. Values to be Addressed in Any Structure

State contexts are different; each state serves different populations, responds to different challenges, and has a unique blend of values, traditions, legal obligations, and political climates.



What works in one state and for one governance purpose may not work in another state. Thus, a state that desires to reexamine its early childhood governance structure should not necessarily begin with a particular model in mind but rather with a focus on its early childhood goals and the functions to be served by governance. Clarity regarding desired functions and outcomes is a foundational step for determining which governance structure will work best for the state.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ See list of interviewees in the appendix.

⁴⁹ See generally *Vision to Practice*, supra note 4

In weighing its options, the state further should consider the foundational values of governance and determine which governance model, given the state's particular context, will best advance those values. As discussed earlier in this paper, cross-cutting values that an early childhood governance model should strive to reflect include coordination, alignment, sustainability, efficiency, and accountability. Once the state has had an opportunity to examine and fully understand its specific context, its goals for early childhood, and the foundational principles of good governance, the state can turn to an examination of existing governance models – coordination, consolidation, and creation. When thinking through the options, the state should be realistic about its capacity to significantly revise its governance structure and deliver desired results.⁵⁰ A key component of capacity will be the governor's support for early childhood goals, particularly where the state is considering governance changes that likely will require gubernatorial participation.

Traditionally and today, many states employ coordinated governance models. This model aims to place authority for separate early childhood programs and services in the government agencies and offices that have the substantive and technical expertise to oversee them. States that maintain coordinated governance must strive to break down silos within the broader early childhood system that result in inefficiencies and incoherence. For any governance model, sustainability requires some level of formality; states that have governance structures based primarily on informal relationships likely will find it harder to sustain coordination and coherence through various transitions.

When thinking through the options, the state should be realistic about its capacity to significantly revise its governance structure and deliver desired results.

2. Considerations in Consolidation or Creation

- A trend in recent years has been for some states to move from coordinated governance to models of consolidation or creation. Several theories about effective governance help explain this shift:
- First, coordination and alignment may be substantially improved by having multiple programs and services under one roof. For example, communication between different programs and services in the field is made easier – so long as the governance entity actually does the communications work to achieve the values of cohesion and alignment.
- Second, consolidation and creation models also may be better for aligning accountability with governance authority, rather than maintaining separately accountable entities for separate programs and services.⁵¹
- Third, both consolidation and creation models create higher-level positions within early childhood (e.g., commissioner, deputy commissioner), which may assist the state with attracting better talent and making early learning leaders more visible within government.

Ultimately, where a state aims to move from coordinated governance to a model of consolidation or creation, the effective implementation of key governance practices will be key – and undoubtedly will require some growing pains.⁵²

⁵¹ See *Governing American Early Care and Education*, *supra* note 6 (important to align entity's authority with accountability functions).

⁵² It is worth noting that states that have adopted consolidated or created governance models experienced success disproportionate success in the federal Early Learning Challenge. Two of the three states (Massachusetts and Washington) with standalone early childhood agencies and three states with early childhood placed in the SEA (California and Maryland) federal won first-round Early Learning Challenge grants.

⁵⁰ See *id.*

a. Choosing Between Consolidation and Creation

When choosing between consolidation and creation, the state should consider whether an existing agency, like the SEA, or a separate standalone agency with its own leadership would have more political clout, a factor that may support enhanced sustainability. For certain states, this dynamic may be affected by virtue of separately electing certain state agency chiefs. Pennsylvania chose a hybrid model, that takes advantage of some of the benefits of creation and some of the benefits of consolidation. The political calculus will differ from state to state, depending in part on the state's constitutional structure as well as its political climate.

Some states have considered consolidation because they believe creation is politically impossible, at least in the short term. It is true that many of the advantages are similar, so that it may be possible to achieve some of the benefits of consolidation without creating a new agency. If in the long run creation would in fact be the best option for the state, a consolidated office could potentially serve as the basis for a spun-off independent agency at some point in the future – so choosing consolidation as a short-term strategy does not necessarily close the door on a long-term creation strategy. We believe it may be appropriate for states interested in the benefits of creation to choose consolidation if creation is not possible.

If a state chooses consolidation as a fallback from creation, it should consider the potential disadvantages of having the consolidated office of early learning administered at too low a level within its host agency. One of the benefits that only creation provides is creating a commissioner-level leader focused solely on early childhood, who can be a voice for the community in the state's political community. In some instances, consolidation creates a high-level leader within the host agency, who may serve some of the same public functions as a

commissioner-level leader. If the early learning office is helmed by a mid-level administrator, however, it is extremely unlikely that its leader will have significant political standing.

b. Considerations in Consolidation

A central decision for consolidation will be determining into which existing agency early childhood governance should be placed. A state considering consolidation should examine the missions and goals of its existing agencies to seek coherence and alignment of objectives with its early childhood system. Consolidation will require significant stakeholder input and commitment from leadership, and the state should assess the dynamics of existing agencies to determine the best fit. The state should seek an agency where the commissioner or chief is prepared to be a leader in the early learning community, and agency staff will embrace early learning as a core part of their mission, rather than an appendage.⁵³ Buy-in from existing agency leadership and staff is vital, given the issues implicated by a merger of authority into an existing state agency.

⁵³ *Id.*



States focused on early learning as a strategy for improving educational outcomes may be interested in consolidating governance in the state education agency. The SEA already is committed to educational outcomes, consolidation of early childhood governance into the SEA can ensure a continued focus on early learning – including making child care an educational program – and may aid in greater coherence of the continuum of early childhood and K-12 education. On the other hand, early learning is different from elementary and secondary learning, and the state will want to ensure that differences are acknowledged. Additionally, a state considering placement of early childhood governance in the SEA should examine the political dynamics of the SEA and the governor's office, a central ally. States that separately elect the chief for the SEA should consider the degree to which the governor and a chief with constitutional independence can coordinate efforts.

c. Challenges in Transition

In our interviews with state leaders in states that have gone through consolidation efforts, and in the existing literature about standalone state agencies, there is an important theme that comes through: the transition from a multi-agency governance structure is extremely hard, but generally leaders in the states that have done it, claim that the results more than justified the pain. Leaders who lived through transitions have offered strategies for ensuring that transitions go well, but have indicated that even the best-planned realignments are extremely difficult. However, their strong overall sentiment has been that the benefits of bringing program administration together means that the long-term benefit makes the short-term difficulty worth it.

“ Leaders who lived through transitions have offered strategies for ensuring that transitions go well, but have indicated that even the best-planned realignments are extremely difficult.”

While this paper does not offer a comprehensive blueprint for managing a transition, we share here some lessons learned from states that have been through it:

- There should be specific strategies for managing operations (and expectations) both for any state employees moving to a new agency and for personnel in the field who will interact with the consolidated or created agency. All of them need to be prepared for the move, and then supported in the wake of the move, both of which take time and resources. The preparation and support will need to address both mechanical and cultural components of the change.
- There are a host of mechanical issues that will need to be addressed in any change. Different agencies typically have different IT systems, different salary structures, different accounting practices, and other issues that will need to be worked out. Even with excellent planning these issues can have bumps in the road, some of which will affect the larger field. For example, even if providers are inclined to support the philosophy of a consolidated agency, they will have a hard time supporting it if the agency's transitional difficulties include late payments to service providers.
- In many states, funding streams – particularly preschool and child care funding streams – are not designed to work well together. In those states, providers utilizing both funding streams often struggle to utilize them both effectively. A change in governance provides an opportunity to rethink existing funding streams, and potentially redesign them to make them more user-friendly.
- In addition to mechanical issues, there are likely to be cultural issues as well. Employees changing agencies are understandably likely to



experience stress about the change, and have to adapt to a new set of cultural norms. This is particularly true if the consolidation or creation is meant to facilitate a new philosophy toward program implementation – for example, an increased focus on the educational aspects of child care.

- States should be thoughtful about what programs are a part of the change. Child care and preschool have been a focus of both consolidation and creation efforts, but there are a host of other programs that might benefit from inclusion in a change. Special education programs and the Head Start collaboration office are among the units that might benefit from a closer connection to preschool and child care programs. Expanding the scope of a potential consolidation or creation effort may make it more politically difficult, but may also increase the state's operating efficiencies.
 - o This also raises the important issue of programs for infants and toddlers, such as home visiting. State preschool generally

focuses on children ages 3 and 4, as does Head Start. Children 3 and 4 are also easier to serve in child care settings than infants and toddlers. As the table in III.D shows, home visiting and Part C are frequently run by agencies other than the agencies administering child care and preschool. Consolidating or creating early childhood programs focused on 3 and 4 year olds without including infants and toddlers may serve to further isolate supports focus on the youngest children. In deciding on a governance structure, states should pay careful attention to the needs of infants and toddlers and ensure that any changes will leave infants and toddlers at least as well off as they were before – preferably better.

These issues are among the most important issues that states will need to address if they want a governance transition to operate smoothly and have positive long-term impacts.

B. Analysis

1. *Advantages and Disadvantages of Governance Model Options*

Each of the three governance structures discussed in this paper – coordination, consolidation, and creation – have strengths and limitations. The following table examines each governance model against the five values of governance discussed in this paper:

Governance model option	VALUES				
	Coordination	Coherence	Sustainability	Efficiency	Accountability
1. Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty in making decisions of mutual concern - Potential for lack of trust among actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Matches program administrative responsibility with each agency's mission - Tension between programmatic missions – e.g., those that focus on child care as parental work support and those that view early child care as educational service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Avoid need fund new centralized data system + Avoid programmatic disruptions that would occur if programs were reorganized (staff, resources, infrastructure costs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureaucracies, disconnected programs with siloed funding and programming - Duplication, poor coordination of services, and inconsistent program direction - Difficulties sharing data - May take longer to address key issues due to infrequency of meetings and need for consensus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibility of receiving lower priority among other programs that more directly align with agencies' core missions
1a. Governor's Office (or other umbrella entity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Facilitates interagency collaboration and cooperation (including, e.g., agreements to streamline monitoring/auditing) by placing oversight within one office - Relies on willingness of agencies to cooperate and collaborate, which may be a particular challenge when one or more agencies are independent of the governor under the state's constitution or laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Establishes entity with mission focused exclusively on early education issues + May help establish unified budget and goals for education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential to be highly influenced by political party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + May improve efficiency of operations by establishing a single point of contact that can eliminate redundancies - Additional costs to create entirely new office, reorganization of staff and resources - Adds another level of bureaucracy and oversight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Office can serve as a mechanism for accountability of agencies + May elevate awareness of issues among policymakers (higher statewide profile) - Early childhood education may receive lower priority - May lack sufficient authority to compel action

Governance model option	VALUES				
	Coordination	Coherence	Sustainability	Efficiency	Accountability
2. Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Facilitates collaboration and cooperation and combining of major administrative functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Integrated infrastructure and consistency in regulations and policies + Alignment of policy, planning, service delivery, and supports + If authority placed with the SEA, more likely that child care will include a focus on kindergarten readiness - Will lack effectiveness if agency staff treat early learning as an appendage of their mission, rather than core part 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + After transition costs ongoing operating costs may be held steady or reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Prospect for streamlined technology system + Tax-saving efficiencies + Facilitates combining separate databases and resolves data sharing issues - Implementation costs and short-term disruptions as programs, staff, and resources are transferred; similarly, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may require significant shifts in way providers are trained, supported, and rewarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Having a single lead agency may make it easier for stakeholders to hold the agency accountable, and may also create more aligned accountability across funding streams - Existing agencies do not have a primary mission of managing early childhood education programs that are provided by a mix of public and private providers



Governance model option	VALUES				
	Coordination	Coherence	Sustainability	Efficiency	Accountability
3. Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Facilitates collaboration and cooperation and combining of major administrative functions - Creates need for all new patterns of any cross-agency coordination and collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Integrated infrastructure and consistency in regulations and policies + Alignment of policy, planning, service delivery, and supports + Cultivation of values to drive leadership and governance + Mission focused exclusively on early education issues - Fragments existing services previously based on service needs rather than age (e.g., health, special education, and child welfare) - Potential appearance of conflict of interest with same agency charged with ensuring centers meet minimum licensing requirement and with ensuring availability of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Opportunity to balance interests and intent and engage public support to provide durability to system - Learning curve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Prospect for streamlined technology system + Tax-saving efficiencies + Facilitates combining separate databases and resolves data sharing issues - Unraveling decades of complexity with preexisting governance structures - Implementation costs and short-term disruptions as programs, staff, and resources are transferred; similarly, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may require significant shifts in way providers are trained, supported, and rewarded - Could increase overall state costs if entity has to establish new finance, personnel, and legal services units - May lack the political muscle of larger agencies with broader portfolios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Potential to elevate profile of early childhood education among policymakers + Clear, visible lines of authority - Focus on internal governance work of building new structure can lead to neglect of external tasks

2. Cross-Cutting Issues

A state's choice among coordination, consolidation, and creation and consequent administrative changes may impact broader state issues and initiatives, including its early childhood advisory council (ECAC) and any regionalization or privatization efforts.

a. Early Childhood Advisory Councils

First, a state should consider how its ECAC fits within a larger governance structure. Because ECACs generally serve to a coordinating role across the early childhood system, they may be well attuned to the coordinated governance model. On the other hand, consolidation or creation into a single lead agency with which to engage may make the ECAC's work easier. On the other hand, a shift to consolidation or creation could make the ECAC's role a bit unclear. The ECAC's coordinator role fundamentally is strategic and advisory; authority and responsibility do not lie with the ECAC. As such, regardless of the governance structure selected, a state should consider what role the ECAC will play and what functions it can serve.

When ECACs operate effectively, they can provide valuable support to agency administrators.⁵⁴ However, a shift in state administrative roles – and potentially an elevation

“While in some states ECACs play a significant role in coordinating among agencies, a governance change can eliminate the need for some of that role, and change the dynamic among agencies.”

of the prominence of one agency's leaders – will affect the role of the ECAC. While in some states ECACs play a significant role in coordinating among agencies, a governance change can eliminate the need for some of that role, and change the dynamic among agencies. In some instances it may make sense for an ECAC to evolve into an advisory group primarily focused on meeting the needs of a consolidated or created agency, but in other instances the ECAC may add value by helping to coordinate the work of a newly strengthened or created agency with other agencies. Because under federal law ECACs are ultimately accountable to governor's offices, the governor's office should take the lead in defining the ECAC's role in a newly changed governance landscape, applying general principles of successful ECAC operation⁵⁵ to the state's new structure.

b. Regional or Decentralized Models

Next, states may have regional or decentralized structures in its governance of early childhood programs and services. Empowering local decisionmakers within their communities may help to elevate awareness of early childhood issues among policymakers and provide greater visibility among relevant groups statewide. Use of regional entities also acknowledges different contexts and needs within the states' regions. At the same time, states must ensure access

⁵⁴ See Regenstein, *State Early Childhood Advisory Councils*, Build Initiative 2008, p. 7.

⁵⁵ See *id.*



to and equity of early childhood services and consider the potential for unclear accountability in regional or decentralized models.

Our interviews and analysis do not focus on the benefits and drawbacks of decentralized models, but rather on whether particular state administrative models are more or less effective at working with regional entities. One clear theme that emerged in our interviews was that the quality of interaction between the state government and regional governments was far more dependent on the quality of people involved than on the specifics of the administrative structure. While interviewees generally believed that consolidated or created structures could in some instance attract better talent, interviewees also believed that the quality of this interaction is also heavily dependent on capacity at the regional level, which may be beyond state control.

c. Public-Private Partnerships

Finally, a state should consider the interplay between its governance model (whether coordinated, consolidated, or created) and any privatization efforts or public-private partnerships. For example, having a consolidated or created entity to oversee the early childhood system may make engagement with private and

philanthropic partners easier. Having a clear lead agency for an early learning agenda can help philanthropies understand where their giving is most likely to be effective. It also can provide the opportunity to bring together multiple sectors of the philanthropic community to act in a more coordinated manner; for example, a consolidated or created administrative structure may be able to bring together funders from the education, social services, and health fields (depending on the agency's overall ambit).

One strategy suggested is to engage the philanthropic in the process of managing a transition. The benefit of this kind of engagement is that there are some discrete costs in transition that the philanthropic community can help bear, including convenings of stakeholders and other one-time analyses that state government might be unable to provide. This early engagement can help the philanthropic community shape and understand the new administrative structure, which can allow it to operate more effectively post-transition. It also can help make the transition smoother and more effective, which can benefit the entire field.

Interviewees emphasized that the key determinant in this relationship is the quality of people involved, and the willingness and ability of state government leaders to engage productively with the philanthropic community. In states that consolidate early learning programs into a larger agency, this may require the personal engagement of the agency head.

“ Having a clear lead agency for an early learning agenda can help philanthropies understand where their giving is most likely to be effective.”





V. Conclusion

In the last decade some states have made ambitious governance changes that involve creating new agencies focused on early learning, or consolidating multiple early learning programs into the same agency. These consolidated agency structures can offer multiple benefits, but states that have been through the process have emphasized that the transition is not easy. States considering a possible governance change should evaluate their existing leadership and capacity, and determine whether a governance change is likely to significantly improve how the state meets key values in governance like coordination, coherence, sustainability, efficiency, and accountability; if the benefits outweigh the costs of transition, a change may be appropriate. And states considering governance changes at this time can engage in peer-to-peer learning with other states that have made governance changes. Ultimately, the critical question is whether a governance change will lead to improved outcomes for the young children who need it most -- and an increasing number of states believe that their answer to that question is yes.

About the Authors

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About the BUILD Initiative

Build
INITIATIVE
**Strong Foundations For
Our Youngest Children**

The BUILD Initiative helps states create comprehensive early childhood systems – coordinated, effective policies that address children's health, mental health and

nutrition, early care and education, family support, and early intervention. BUILD's vision is at the center of an emerging and vibrant state-based policy movement in the early childhood development field. We work with those who set policies, provide services and advocate for our youngest children to make sure that they are safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed in school.

www.buildinitiative.org





Key Themes Report

Interviews with Connecticut Key Informants Regarding Early Care and Education System Improvement

September 2012

Prepared For:

Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative

Prepared by:

The Build Initiative

Kristin Wiggins, Karen Ponder, and Susan Hibbard

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Introduction

Background

Across the nation in recent years there has been increased policy, political, and philanthropic focus on building, improving, and sustaining comprehensive, coordinated early care and education systems so that children can be successful in school and life. In Connecticut, the momentum built from diverse parents and families, local communities, the early childhood field including service providers and advocates, philanthropic partners, government officials and leaders, and policy thinkers from inside and outside government has led to a legislative charge to design and put in place a coordinated system of early care and education within two years.

Public Act 11-181 (PA 11-181) became law in July, 2011. **Per PA 11-181, the State is required to have in place a “coordinated system of early care and education and child development” on and after July 1, 2013** that “shall consist of comprehensive and aligned policies, responsibilities, practices and services for young children and their families, including prenatal care and care for children birth to eight.”¹ The law also outlines the role of local and regional Early Childhood Councils, non-profit organizations, and philanthropic organizations as well as identifies desired outcomes for children and families.²

The Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative is partnering with the State in order to improve the positive outcomes for children ages birth to eight years old and their families as mandated by PA 11-181. The Collaborative commissioned the Build Initiative to complete a research effort as part of the planning process for the creation of a comprehensive, coordinated early care and education system.

Build’s research includes a two pronged approach.

1. Key Informant Interviews

A wide range of key informants in Connecticut were interviewed so that multi-dimensional insights, information, and opinions that provide deeper understanding of

¹ State of Connecticut General Assembly. (n.d.). *Substitute Senate Bill No. 1103. Public Act No. 11-181. An Act Concerning Early Childhood Education and the Establishment of a Coordinated System of Early Care and Education and Child Development*. Section 2, p. 2. Retrieved on July 24, 2012 from <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2011/act/pa/pdf/2011PA-00181-R00SB-01103-PA.pdf>.

² Zero to Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families. (n.d.). Retrieved on July 24, 2012 from http://policy.db.zerotothree.org/policy/view.aspx?InitiativeID=972&origin=results&QS='&union=AND&viewby=50&startrec=1&tbl_Public_InitiativeYMGHFREStateTerritoryTribe=CT&tbl_Public_InitiativeYMGHFREDescription=&top_parent=164.

1 Key Themes Report, Interviews with Connecticut Key Informants Regarding Early Care and Education Systems Improvement, September 2012

the political environment, tensions among existing players, state of readiness for improved coordination, and opportunities and pitfalls involved in making system improvements could be elicited. (See Appendix A on p.38 for interview protocol.)

The information from the interviews will be taken into account when enumerating the pros and cons of various approaches to state-level governance of early childhood efforts and help to determine the next best steps in Connecticut's early care and education systems development.

2. National Research

Review of practice and thinking of selected states across the nation will provide pros, cons, and lessons learned regarding various decisions about the scope and placement when centralizing early care and education. Structures that connect state and local level systems development, have public-private partnerships, and engage philanthropy will be examined. Best practices in terms of cross-sector financing and blended funding as well as emerging lessons or cautions from the states that have chosen to house their early care and education efforts in departments of education will be explored.

This report focuses on the key themes from the key informant interviews. A separate report sharing the national research will be completed. And a third, final report will merge learning from the two separate reports.

Methodology

More than 40 individuals were identified by the Collaborative as people whose vantage points would be valuable to the interview process. These key informants represented non-profit, philanthropy, and public and private sectors including: non-profit and service provider leaders in parent engagement and advocacy, local systems building, professional development for early care and education providers, and working with formal and informal care providers; philanthropic donors and grantees; inside and outside government policy planners and influencers; high-ranking government officials and program administrators; and outside government players focused on data and research.

Diverse vantage points were captured in the interviews, including perspectives from: local communities; local and state level service providers; adult health, mental health, and addictive services; higher education; K-12 education; and various early learning settings.

Thirty-nine key informants were interviewed resulting in a 95% capture rate from the original list which is very high and reflects good participation in this information gathering process.

Twenty-two phone interviews were conducted mid-June through mid-July 2012. Seventeen of the calls were one-on-one interviews and five were group interviews. Individual interviews lasted 45- to 90-minutes with the majority being on the longer end. Group interviews involved three to 11 interviewees and lasted 90-minutes to more than two hours.

Confidentiality of Key Informants

It is important to highlight the confidentiality agreement made with key informants who were interviewed. **All notes from individual and group phone interviews are confidential and only known to the Build team members involved in this work.** No specific comments will be credited to any particular person in this report. No identifying information will be provided to the members of the Collaborative or State Early Learning Planning Team.

Thus, there is no appendix to this report listing who the key informants are and where they work. While some members of the Collaborative had access to the original list of key informants, there were often changes to the list (e.g., a high-ranking government official appointed a key staff member to take the call or someone was not available so an alternate was interviewed).

Key informants were informed at multiple junctures (e.g., in the Introduction section of the protocol which was sent to them in advance of the interview, during the interview, and in the thank you email that was sent to them after the interview) that the information they shared would be kept confidential and that only members of the Build team involved in this work would be seeing their individual notes.

Members of the Collaborative decided **this level of confidentiality was important in order to elicit candor on topics that are politically sensitive given the key informants' relationships or working proximity to other players in the system.** The interviews confirmed this. A number of key informants paused during the interview before sharing their candid opinion and asked about confidentiality before proceeding.

Key Themes in Brief

This section provides brief descriptions of the common themes that prevailed during the interviews with nearly 40 Connecticut key informants from diverse backgrounds.

1. The current system is ineffective and is failing families.

Key informants strongly agree that the current system is not working because of lack of funding alignment, program coordination, and interagency collaboration. Furthermore, the system is not supportive of or accessible by parents.

2. A high-quality, comprehensive, and coordinated early care and education system is needed in Connecticut and every child should have access to it.

There is a strong demand for an improved system. It should be high-quality, inclusive, accessible, comprehensive, and coordinated. Key informants believe a more collaborative system is necessary due to overlapping jurisdictions, increased complexity of child and family support issues, and a desire to better integrate funding.

3. Systems building work requires a shared understanding of key elements, backed by data.

While there may be increased awareness about the importance of investments in high-quality early care and education, key informants said there are still no shared and articulated definitions of basic terms like school readiness and quality. They wish these terms could be better defined and substantiated with data, communicated to policymakers and the public, and lead to the field embracing shared goals. They also desire a value statement to help guide the systems building work.

4. The process should not be the project.

Establishing widespread buy-in is seen as critical to the success of the new system. Yet key informants do not want the planning process, including labor- and time-intensive pieces like trust and relationship building, to become the project itself. Key informants want to move beyond planning and the congestion of consensus building to the implementation stage.

5. Work at the local level is an essential, widely acknowledged asset.

The local level coordination and leadership of early care and education work is a very important asset to maintain and enhance according to key informants. The Discovery Communities funded through the Discovery Initiative of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund were the most commonly referenced example of success. The local work is perceived as very successful and promising. Key informants believe it should be incorporated in the systems building work ahead.

6. Systems building must happen vertically—bottom up and top down—as well as horizontally.

Systems building must happen in parallel processes: local to state, state to local, and across sectors. A balance is desired between local flexibility and state uniformity when it comes to setting and funding priorities, implementing policies, and reporting. Key informants want the systems building process to reflect this by being informed from the bottom up and top down. Additionally, collaboration across sectors should be developed and mid-level program and policy implementers should be assets.

7. Individual examples of excellence exist in isolated pockets across the State.

One of Connecticut's great strengths is excellent programs. Yet these programs can lack connectivity across domains and are not brought to scale on a regional or statewide level. Thus, stakeholders have low awareness levels of them. The fragmented state of the early care and education system is in part due to lack of a regional system. Key informants would like to see these exemplary programs brought to scale in a manner that is supported by appropriate data about need and cost as well as infrastructure considerations.

8. The purposes of the system should include providing services, diffusing information, problem solving, and capacity building.

Key informants believe the system should: provide services to children and families;

communicate with system leaders and staff as well as external stakeholders including families; identify the problem(s) to solve and make progress in achieving goals; and build staff capacity at the local and state levels.

9. Data and accountability are highly valued and perceived as interconnected and critical to the success of a better coordinated system.

Key informants highly value data and accountability. Currently, they believe there are two problems with accountability: (a) the system is not accountable to the consumer when services are not accessible or of high quality; and (b) the system is unable to hold itself accountable for achieving desired outcomes. Better data is believed to help with a new, uniform accountability system.

10. There is no agreement on what the new structure should look like. There is agreement that form should follow function.

There was agreement on: who to involve in the new system including the critical agencies (see the suggested two tiers of agency involvement in chart (a) on page 24) and players such as local entities, business, child care providers, parents, and philanthropy; and that regardless of the type of structure, form should follow function. Yet, there were varied responses about the exact form and location of the new structure. When asked about what type of structure key informants thought would be best, the three most common responses were: (a) a new agency of equal stature of other agencies; (b) unsure about specific structure or location but a new way of thinking and working is needed; and (c) a robust division in the State Department of Education. There were strong reservations expressed about the third option.

11. Three significant barriers to achieving a more comprehensive, coordinated system are: (a) distinct agency cultures; (b) fear of losing turf; and (c) fear of change.

Key informants believe agencies work in extreme silos because of choice and bureaucratic obstacles, vested players (e.g., organizations or providers) are very worried about turf or

territory as change becomes more imminent, and preferences for familiarity means there is a fear of change. These three hurdles are seen as the most significant.

12. There is strong skepticism that the State Department of Education has the capacity to preside over the early care and education system and manage the necessary interagency coordination.

Key informants had a lot to say about the State Department of Education because it is perceived as a highly viable location to house the new early care and education system (due to the Governor's real or perceived preference for this). Some informants shared firsthand knowledge of the Department and others relayed second-hand information about negative experiences clients/families had. Others seemed generally concerned about the primary connection between education and early learning—recognizing the need for association but noting that education did not fully encompass the needs of young children. And in some cases, key informants had strong opinions about public education in general. A neutral observation was the newly passed education reforms would require much of the Department's energy thus leaving little bandwidth for early childhood priorities. Key informants agree that the Department is a critical player given its authority over kindergarten through third grade.

13. The window of opportunity is now.

Key informants see this as a unique time due to the planning process outlined by PA 11-181, the Governor's leadership on early childhood issues, increased awareness about the importance of the early years, philanthropic involvement, and increased will from the early childhood community to transform the system.

Key Themes In-depth

Overview

This section explores the prevailing themes that emerged from the interviews, layers of nuance under each theme, and how the various key themes interconnect.

Over the course of the interviews, key themes emerged in regards to the:

- general problems with the current early care and education system;
- areas for desired improvement;
- goals and functions of a new, better coordinated and comprehensive early care and education entity; and
- barriers to and opportunities with the system improvement effort as prompted by PA 11-181.

There was clear, widespread agreement about **two fundamental starting points**.

- The current system is not effective.
- The current system needs improvement.

Yet there was no clear agreement on what the best location or exact form would be for a structure that can deliver on-going, comprehensive, integrated early childhood services.

Additionally, key informants **clearly value**:

- **parents and families**;
- **local communities**; and
- the **philanthropic community**.

They believe the new system should embrace these assets by being more user-friendly and respectful towards parents and families; maintaining and enhancing the successful community-level collaborative work, particularly the Discovery Communities; and optimizing the interest, expertise, and resources of the philanthropic community whom they respect and appreciate.

Yet these are high-level values and key informants did not discuss *how* to have meaningful engagement from parents and families, local communities, and the philanthropic community in ways that would ensure a commitment of time, resources, and their integration into the system. (E.g., establish a parent advisory council to provide guidance to the new early childhood and education entity, use existing local leadership structures and communication

channels to collect input from communities, or establish a more formal relationship with the philanthropic community.)

This leads up to an overarching observation—**key informants agreed that Connecticut is very good at planning but is less successful with implementation**, thus many people were not able to say what specific next steps would be wise but they desire to move beyond the planning phase.

Two other areas that key informants overwhelmingly agreed on are:

- the demand for and perceived value of **data** is high; and
- increased **accountability** is desired and access to improved data is seen as a means to achieve that.

In other topics, such as resources and leadership, there were degrees of agreement.

- **Resources.** Most key informants said there are currently inadequate resources dedicated to the early care and education system. A number of people believe that if the system were better coordinated and funding streams were better aligned, then cost savings could be found yet there were no specific ideas on where those cost savings would come from. Coming off the legislative session, many key informants readily pointed to the recent victories of increased investments in School Readiness (a 1,000 slot increase) and the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System yet one key informant said this was counterbalanced by cuts to child care subsidies.
- **Leadership.** There were degrees of agreement on a variety of leadership issues as explored in key themes 1, 5, 6, and 8. In some instances these points may seem conflicting. For example, key informants generally believe there is a lack of high-level leadership (key themes 1 and 5), some believe that capacity building of high- and mid-level leadership is needed (key theme 8), *and* many believe that the leadership from the Governor, Education Commissioner, and some legislators is an asset (key theme 6). **While some points may seem a bit contradictory, those layers of nuance are explored in this report because to some segments of the key informants, each of those points is true.**

It is important to note that while it is fair to say there is general agreement on a number of points as illuminated in this report, there were often one to three key informants that diverged in part with what others generally agreed upon or had an outlying viewpoint. In at least one instance (e.g., key theme 6.a.i. on Local to state), this type of minority viewpoint was highlighted as important due to its connection to other themes explored in this brief.

Key Themes

1. The current system is ineffective and is failing families.

Key informants strongly agree that the current system, often described as a “non-system,” is not working. Furthermore, they agree it is not as accessible as it should be for families for the implicit reasons related to being too dense and complicated for families to navigate with any ease and the explicit reasons of general unfriendliness towards parents, unawareness about the real issues low-income and at-risk families deal with, and lack of support for cultural competence and the inability to adequately serve families of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The main **reasons why they believe the current system is not working** are:

- unsupportive approach toward parents and families;
- lack of alignment in funding streams;
- little to no coordination across programs (public and private);
- glaring inconsistencies in the quality of child care programs across the state;
- no synchronization between the early care and education system and the K-12 education system (e.g., birth to five programs with K-12 education);
- no culture of interagency collaboration (i.e. agencies that have contact with children and families are severely siloed);
- lack of high-level leadership, authority, and accountability for performance in early care and education; and
- significant disconnect between state policy setting and local implementation (which could conversely be seen as a disconnect between supporting local needs and planning efforts with state-level systems and policies).

2. A high-quality, comprehensive, and coordinated early care and education system is needed in Connecticut and every child should have access to it.

Following agreement that the current system is not effective, **key informants overwhelmingly agreed that transforming the existing system into something comprehensive, coordinated, and accessible is necessary due to overlapping jurisdictions, increasing complexity, and a strong desire to integrate resources.**

The National Policy Consensus Center indicates there are four reasons why collaborative governance is needed. They are: “accelerating change, overlapping institutions and jurisdictions, increasing complexity, a need to integrate policies and resources.”³ Key informants commonly noted three of those reasons as detailed below.

- (a) Overlapping jurisdictions.** Children and families participate in various programs and systems. Their needs transcend the jurisdictions of different agencies. For instance, a family may need housing as well as child care assistance. Also, a school-aged child in foster care participates in the foster system as overseen by the Department of Children and Families but also attends a public school under the State Department of Education’s authority. Key informants believe improved coordination and collaboration between programs and systems will lead to more effective service delivery for children and families as well as a more efficient system.
- (b) Increasing complexity** in how to best support children and families when their success is linked to a variety of factors. As noted in the previous point, the needs of a child or family often transcend programs, services, and systems. This creates complexity in terms of ensuring children and families are receiving the support they need, understanding what desired outcomes resources are contributing to (especially when data is not unduplicated), and managing eligibility and standards both from the perspective of families and programs.
- (c) A strong desire to integrate resources so that dollars can be used more optimally.** Key informants believe state and federal funding streams could be better aligned to ensure more comprehensive care and continuity of care. They simultaneously believe that unduplicated data is very important to understanding how effective each dollar is in terms of achieving desired outcomes. For instance, right now data is available on how many children are being served by public programs but it is unclear how many of those children are counted multiple times across a variety of programs.

Better alignment of funding is also believed to lead to reduction of gaps and duplications and generally a more effective service delivery system. Examples include reducing gaps in needed services across the age spectrum or coverage of care as well as decreasing duplicative services and bringing exemplary programs to scale. A couple of

³ National Policy Consensus Center. (n.d.). Retrieved on July 26, 2012 from http://www.policyconsensus.org/publicsolutions/ps_2.html.

key informants said this could lead to cost savings that could be applied to other areas such as coordination or other program investments.

Key informants emphasized that the new system should be high-quality and inclusive in three aspects:

- (d) The system should deliver consistently high-quality services across the state for all children regardless of the type of care.** The goal that all early learning programs should be high-quality was overtly stated by a strong majority of key informants. And the issue of inconsistent quality across the state being a significant problem was also raised. These comments were almost always in reference to child care and early learning settings versus more generally (i.e. including all services for young children).

Strong standards and the focus on accreditation for licensed child care centers are seen as very positive and often a source of pride. Yet those efforts are undermined by poor, punitive monitoring by too many players. For instance, a child care program may have different standards to meet for licensing, Head Start, School Readiness, and Care for Kids and be monitored by different oversight entities. Further, key informants say oversight agencies get caught up in the level of detail they need (e.g., photo copying every sign-in and sign-out sheet) which does not convey any level of trust for a program that may have had an arduous and expensive process to get accredited. Another consideration that a couple of key informants raised was dueling philosophies behind assistance programs (e.g., is child care assistance an early childhood development strategy or a parent work force development strategy?) which can create friction in program administration.

A few key informants said agencies take a “gotcha” approach versus an affirmative approach of supporting programs in achieving and maintaining quality, thus putting a **heavy, unfair burden on providers to raise the quality bar**. A couple mentioned that the State goal of having a teacher with a bachelors’ degree in every classroom by the year 2020 seems unattainable.

Additionally, there is **no equitable effort for raising quality in licensed family home child care or informal child care settings like family, friend and neighbor care** (also referred to as kith and kin) which was noted by key informants to be a substantial problem. They believe quality should be good in all settings that parents choose.

One key informant noted that there are 2,675 licensed family home child cares with the capacity to serve more than 22,900 children (ages infant to school age) and 2,400 unlicensed family, friend, and neighbor caregivers in the Care For Kids registry (with a huge number beyond that not included in the registry). Other key informants speculated that a large number of infants and toddlers are in informal care settings due to the shortage of infant and toddler slots in general and also the difficulty for families to access assistance for infant and toddler care.

A few key informants said the **Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System** held potential to help with making quality across the state more uniform yet said there is much work to be done in developing it.

(e) The system should be accessible for and inclusive of all types of families and care settings.

A number of key informants noted that right now public investments are predominantly targeted at the most at-risk children and families. While they understand the reasoning for that, they also want services to support children and families who are likely to succeed with less intensive services or interventions. A few mentioned that the early care and education system and K-12 education system are failing high achieving learners.

Most want the system to be accessible for and inclusive of all, including children and families:

- from **all socioeconomic levels** (e.g., children who are subsidized through every mechanism, private pay families, and families who do not have access to subsidies but struggle to pay the entire cost of early care and education services);
- from **diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds**; and
- with **special needs** (e.g., physical, health, or behavioral).

Additionally, key informants want the system to be **universal and inclusive across early care settings** recognizing children have early learning experiences at home, in child care centers, family home child cares, and with family, friend, and neighbors (see key theme 2.d.).

(f) The system itself should be a quality enterprise. Consumers should believe it is a legitimate, positive, and dependable place to engage. This is related to part of theme 1

(the system is failing families). Key informants could readily point out what they did not like about the system in terms of being unfriendly towards families (or consumers). For instance, key informants said the system is a maze for families to navigate, that it is hard to figure out what services families qualify for, who to contact about which services, and then when families are able to connect with program staff, they may be treated poorly, spoken down to, or re-directed somewhere else to speak about different but related services, which serves as another deterrent to getting help.

As one person noted, in the private market there are many courses of action available for a consumer such as filing a complaint, speaking with upper management, and perhaps most powerful, boycotting the product or service. Yet there is a lack of recourse for families who receive needed public services. System accountability is also lacking, thus seeking assistance from the current system is not a positive, quality experience for families.

Key informants note that ultimately it is the child that suffers because they are not able to receive needed services when there are too many barriers. Key informants want these barriers and challenges to be addressed.

3. Systems building work requires a shared understanding of key elements, backed by data.

A number of key informants said **there are no shared or articulated definitions for quality and school readiness** within Connecticut's early care and education field yet they wished there were. Because there is no common language established among the early childhood field, it is in turn not well communicated to the public.

While there seems to be widespread awareness of the value (e.g., return on investment) of investments in high-quality early care and education among policymakers, a number of key informants said it is very hard to drill down about why more resources (this includes financial as well as human capital from the early care and education community) are needed to make improvements especially given the state of the economy. Partly this is **related to lack of data** (see key theme 9) but it is also a result of no shared language around what is meant specifically in regards to school readiness (the "little s and r" opposed to School Readiness the program) and quality. For instance, what does it mean to be ready for school and what is the data that helps define the problem given key informants do not have confidence in the school readiness assessment?

They see this **common language as a starting point to embracing collective goals and leading to buy-in**, both of which are important foundational pieces to begin and fuel the systems building work ahead, which most recognize will be difficult. They believe both levels—the early childhood community and the public—**embracing common, articulated goals and/or visions is critical to both the creation and sustaining of a new, improved system. They also desire a value statement to help guide the systems building work.**

4. The process should not be the project.

Key informants agreed that **trust and relationship building** as well as creating widespread buy-in are very important during the process of planning, developing, and implementing a new system. In fact, a number requested that trust and/or relationship building both with and between internal system leaders (e.g., mid-level government managers, program administrators, and those who manage agency staff or have direct contact with consumers) and external system partners (e.g., service providers, community-level collaboratives, and philanthropy) become an intentional part of this effort. They do not want the importance of those elements to be underestimated. Yet they also **do not want the planning process, particularly the pieces that require much energy and attention such as trust, consensus, and will building to become the project itself.**

A number of key informants said Connecticut is very good at planning but is less successful with implementation. Some say **a pitfall is stagnating in a planning phase and/or getting congested with consensus building** and then not ever getting to the hard but potentially very rewarding work of implementation because fatigue or loss of interest sets in.

5. Work at the local level is an essential, widely acknowledged asset.

The vast majority of key informants said **the coordination and leadership of early care and education work at the local level is a very important asset to maintain and enhance.** Many said this work has risen up despite of or perhaps because of poor state leadership on prioritizing the needs of young children and their families with a truly collaborative, holistic approach.

The Discovery Communities funded through the Discovery Initiative of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund were by far the most commonly discussed example of success at the local level due to the comprehensive planning (e.g., it must truly be birth to eight years old),

collaborative approach (e.g., diverse stakeholders *must* be involved), and the foundation's commitment to the work both in terms of providing financial support that is much needed but not available through other channels and through creating opportunities for different communities to learn from each other's successes and challenges. It is an example of a successful public-private partnership having evolved into an effort that receives funding from the Children's Fund and the State Department of Education.

Because the Discovery Communities are perceived as very successful and promising, key informants believe they are a natural and critical player in the systems building work ahead.

The Child Health and Development Institute's focus on health, which is integrated as part of the Discovery Initiative, was also mentioned a number of times as being important. Family Resource Centers were very commonly mentioned as having enormous potential to build a better local-to-state connection.

6. Systems building must happen vertically—bottom up and top down—as well as horizontally.

Key informants believe that system building is successful when it is approached in parallel processes.

(a) The vertical development must be informed from both ends—local and state.

Generally, key informants want a balance between local flexibility and state uniformity when it comes to setting and funding priorities, implementing policies, and reporting. They value the ability for local communities to define their greatest needs and make appropriate decisions with resources as well as some centralization or regionalization of data collection, resource authority and distribution, and policy setting. Thus, they want the systems building process to reflect this balance by being informed from the bottom up and top down.

(i) Local to state. Building on key theme 5, key informants value and are invested in the excellent work happening now at the local level. They believe it must be prominently involved in the design phase, implementation phase, and/or structural composition.

Key informants think local community collaboratives, parents, and organizations need to be involved in the system building work to prevent duplicative efforts, share perspective in order to avoid pitfalls, and as a gesture of respect and acknowledgement of the work they are doing. A couple of key informants said input

from the local level players is particularly important in regards to any data system development. Additionally, they believe involving the local level is critical in helping establish buy-in.

However, it is worth noting that a small minority of key informants' rationale was not completely altruistic. Some key informants believe their specific community or program is exceptional and/or highly unique for reasons such as their distinct demographics compared to other parts of the state, no one else reaches the constituency they do, or no one else is able to deliver the type of services as effectively as they do.

A couple of organizations feared being left out or pushed out of the systems building work. They believe that will result in a state entity (e.g., the State Department of Education) threatening or eliminating their role which would be counterproductive to the success of the new system given their **exceptionalism**. A few other key informants said this type of outlook was fairly common. (See key theme 11 for more on fear of losing turf and fear of change.)

(ii) State to local. Many key informants believe leadership on early childhood (including serious sponsorship, unwavering commitment, and depth of knowledge) is lacking. Yet a number of people said the Governor, Education Commissioner, and some legislators are very supportive of increasing effective early childhood investments and policies and that their leadership in those ways is seen as an asset. Many said the Governor and Education Commission are politically brave and hold promise for becoming stronger early childhood champions for interagency collaboration and establishing a coordinated, comprehensive system.

(b) Horizontal development is also important but was not discussed as in depth as the vertical elements. Key informants want the system to be **strengthened across sectors** through better linkages, alignment, data, and collaboration. They also want mid-level leadership as well as **policy and program implementers to be system assets**.

7. Individual examples of excellence exist in isolated pockets across the State.

Several key informants said a great strength of Connecticut is excellent programs. Yet, they say those programs generally **lack connectivity across domains** (e.g., an outstanding health-

focused program is not connected with other parts of the spectrum of services) and are not brought to scale on a regional or statewide level. That leads to parents, service providers, and policymakers having **low awareness levels** of these exemplar programs which impedes bringing them to scale where there is need.

When asked about areas of success or to name specific initiatives that should be maintained or enhanced, the most common responses were (listed roughly by highest to lowest frequency of mentions):

- Discovery Communities
- 2-1-1 Child Care
- Family Resource Centers
- Birth to Three system
- NAEYC accreditation efforts for child care centers
- School Readiness
- Early Childhood Consultation Partnership
- Home visiting programs
- Early Childhood Cabinet
- Ages and Stages
- Early literacy programs
- All Our Kin
- CT Charts a Course

While there was some discussion about a few of the programs or initiatives listed above in regards to whether they function in isolation (e.g., many believe the federal home visitation grant implementation could be better synchronized with other parts of the early childhood service spectrum), it is important to note that **the list of programs above should not be seen as specific examples of functioning in silos.**

Rather, it is an observation of key informants that the successful programs and initiatives are often not as interconnected as they could be which is in part due to **the fragmented state of the early care and education system and the lack of a uniform intermediary or regional governance structure.** Furthermore, key informants would like to see **exemplary programs brought to scale in a manner supported by appropriate data about need and cost as well as infrastructure considerations** (e.g., whether a local community program support a wider catchment area).

8. The purposes of the system should include providing services, diffusing information, problem solving, and capacity building.

The IBM Center for The Business of Government at the University of Arizona defines collaborative public management networks as involving multiple agencies and organizations that are both formal and informal in nature.⁴ Participants in the network can be governmental or nongovernmental yet are interdependent and their organization as a collaborative network usually resulted from a specific purpose such as responding to a problem or a foreseeable problem. Four types of collaborative public management networks are defined by purpose and task by the IBM Center for The Business of Government:⁵

- Service implementation network. This type of network delivers services to clients.
- Information diffusion network. This type of network is designed to share information across government sectors.
- Problem solving network. This type of network focuses on solving a specific problem and relies on past cooperative relationships.
- Community capacity building network. This type of network aims to build social and community capital so that a community is better equipped, more resilient, and more responsive to future community problems.

Key informants indicated the new system should focus on efforts in all four of those areas. However, some distinctions should be made between their comments and how the IBM Center for The Business of Government categorizes the types of collaborative public management networks as noted below in “Information diffusion” and “Problem solving” bullet points.

- **Service implementation.** Key informants believe the new system should deliver services to consumers (children and families) either through staff of the new entity or through contracting services out via community-based nonprofit organizations.
- **Information diffusion.** The new system must communicate on two critical levels key informants said: (a) to leaders, experts, and staff who work for the system and/or communicate about the system’s services to the consumer; and (b) to external

⁴ Briton Milward, H., Provan, K. (2006). “A Manager’s Guide to Choosing and Using Collaborative Networks,” pp. 6, 9/44. IBM Center for the Business of Government, University of Arizona. P. 26/44. Retrieved on July 27, 2012 from <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/CollaborativeNetworks.pdf>.

⁵ Briton Milward, H., Provan, K. (2006). “A Manager’s Guide to Choosing and Using Collaborative Networks,” pp. 8,10-11, 26/44. IBM Center for the Business of Government, University of Arizona. P. 26/44. Retrieved on July 26, 2012 from <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/CollaborativeNetworks.pdf>.

stakeholders such as consumers, philanthropic partners, community-level partners, policymakers, advocates, and the public at large. The latter is an expansion on the definition as noted above. The internal *and external* communication is important because it helps set the tone for a new coordinated, collaborative, and family-friendly approach and helps promote the new system in general thereby increasing awareness, buy-in, and sustainability.

- **Problem solving.** As discussed in key theme 3 (“Systems building work requires a shared understanding of key elements, backed by data.”), key informants want some common language around definitions, vision, and goals. From there, they want this new system to set out to solve the identified problems, or advance progress in achieving the collective goal(s). This work does depend on past cooperative relationships as noted in the definition above, but key informants *also believe new relationships and/or transforming existing working relationships* are critical. They believe a new era of interagency collaboration, coordination across programs (both public and private), and smoother linkages between state and local efforts is necessary to help problem solve.
- **Capacity building.** This came up often with key informants and they spoke of it in terms of a human resource issue both at the local level (e.g., the Discovery Communities or local leadership platforms) and state level (e.g., agency staff, political and policy leadership, and champions or ambassadors). For instance, developing or refining skills and/or increasing the effectiveness of existing or new players so that more effective service delivery and modes of operation would be put in place. Key informants said the new system should have the capacity to identify needs, gaps, duplications, and then build needed capacity appropriately.

9. Data and accountability are highly valued and perceived as interconnected and critical to the success of a better coordinated system.

Key informants highly value data and accountability. They want the system to be more accountable and say a uniform accountability system is needed because the current state of accountability is poor and an area of system failure. The lack of reliable, unduplicated data was common reasoning for why system wide accountability seems unattainable right now.

They see **accountability failing on two levels.**

- (a) **Consumer level.** If a parent is dissatisfied with the services they are receiving or are unable to acquire services, then they have no real recourse.

One example given by a key informant is when a parent of a child with a disability is trying to find child care and the provider refuses to accept the child due to the disability. The parent may call the Department of Developmental Services that administers Birth to Three (IDEA Part C). The Department of Developmental Services may then direct the parent to call the Department of Public Health who oversees licensing of child care. The Department of Public Health may tell them to file a complaint under the Americans with Disabilities Act, yet it is very unclear how to do that.

Another very common example provided was parents' dissatisfaction with Connecticut's public school system. A parent may turn to the Family Resource Center due to a trusting relationship yet the Center does not have authority to help solve the problem. The parent is then uncertain about what level of government to seek help from, if they are not happy with the response from the school. This problem of dissatisfaction with the public school system and lack of clarity around how to deal with a grievance is not unique to Connecticut but is important to note here given it contributes to the public's perception of the State Department of Education as a potential location for the new system (see key theme 12) because this is one example, key informants say, that the Department is thought of in a negative light.

Thus, **the consumer sees there is no accountability for the provider, school, or the state-level oversight entity.** Most importantly, the parent wants their child in a care and education setting that is supportive, accepting, and of high quality. Key informants see better accountability helping parents to achieve that.

- (b) System level.** Key informants say the system itself currently has no accountability for achieving its charge. This is strongly related to lack of adequate data, key theme 3 ("There is a desire for a value statement to guide the systems building work."), and a portion of key theme 11 (one key barrier is "distinct agency culture").

The **data** needed to keep the system accountable for meeting its charge is either not available (e.g., because it does not exist or the agency responsible for it is unwilling to share it) or if it is available it is inadequate (e.g., it includes duplicated counts of children receiving other services or is of poor quality and unreliable).

Lack of resources to build and enhance data systems as well as **onerous rules and procedures** of agencies and attitudes of the staff that control data were the most commonly noted **reasons for why the current state of data collection, sharing, and quality is poor.**

However, many say that **the charges and/or goals of each agency and the larger early care and education field are not well defined or articulated**, thus making accountability hard to achieve.

Nearly every key informant had a lot to say about data. They want better and more readily accessible data. They referenced the various data committees and efforts happening now and wished all of those efforts could be better coordinated and a more effective statewide data system in general could be created.

Better data is seen as a way to substantiate need, define demand, inform planning, increase information sharing, decrease duplicative efforts, communicate successes (with decision makers and the public in general), and make the case for continued investments and sustainability.

10. There is no agreement on what the new structure should look like. There is agreement that form should follow function.

There was no vast agreement on what type of structure (e.g., new agency, new division in an existing agency, public private partnership, etc.) would be the best fit for Connecticut.

However, regardless of the type of structure, where it is housed, and the thoroughness of planning and design work, **key informants strongly believe form should follow function.**

Additionally, they had **cautions about the new system** as listed below.

- The new structure will not be a panacea. Expectations need to be framed and managed carefully.
- Collaborative work is always difficult due to its inclusivity (i.e. collaborative efforts require many players to communicate and work together) and requires regular evaluation and course adjustments to stay on the path to meeting goals.
- The “why bother,” rationale for systems building beyond the mandate in PA 11-181 should be clearly communicated in a concrete vision. This vision needs to be established and well communicated as noted in key theme 3. Achieving the vision and goals should be the charge of the new entity and should guide the work (i.e. start with this end in mind).

- While collaboration is desired and valued, it does not mean consensus at every step will be achieved. If striving for consensus at every juncture is a guideline, then key informants believe the work will be stalled as discussed in key theme 4.
- Collaboration and managing dissent must be planned for in equal measure.

The **types of suggested structures** and locations along with key informants' thoughts on functions, partners, positive opportunities, the role of the State Department of Education, and pitfalls to avoid are itemized below.

Of note about the charts below:

- The agencies or partners that need to be involved are the same for every structure option listed because there was general agreement in this area.
- In some cases some sections of charts are empty or sparsely populated. This reflects the:
 - frequency of mentions (e.g., fewer people mentioning it may have led to fewer ideas shared);
 - concept is less developed or clear for the key informants (e.g., a couple thought a public private partnership was a good option for a few reasons but did not go into other details);
 - key informants reverted to talking about an approach or philosophy (e.g., form should follow function regardless of the type of structure) versus the specific type of structure they initially suggested; and/or
 - key informants did not answer the question because they had no thoughts on that specific issue or because they did not want their opinion, politically sensitive in nature, to be recorded anywhere.
- All the suggested options, with the exception of (d) assume some level of consolidation of programs that currently exist in different agencies.

The information is organized in charts for each type of suggested structure. The charts are ordered by frequency of mention from highest to lowest. A couple key informants said they did not feel qualified to answer specific questions about structure and location of a new, improved system.

(a) New agency

Suggested at least 13 times. This new agency is seen as free standing entity of equal stature with other agencies. Some acknowledged that a new, "mega structure" is appealing to many but wonder if the risk is really worth it given the required effort, resources, and resulting churn of the existing systems and programs.

Functions, responsibilities, and authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive focus (not just academics), including health, with broad authority • Financial authority and budget management responsibilities • Policy making and influencing • Develop strategic vision and departmental organization to carry out vision • Create, promote, and oversee coordination across programs and services • Restructure service delivery system to be driven by quality and effectiveness • Accountability (e.g., keeping system itself accountable for achieving identified child-based outcomes)
Agencies or partners that need to be involved	<p>Critical agencies and government entities (listed alphabetically):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Regents for Higher Education • Dept. of Children and Families • Dept. of Developmental Services • Dept. of Mental Health and Addictive Services • Dept. of Public Health • Dept. of Social Services • Early Childhood Education Cabinet • Governor's Office • Office of Policy Management • State Dept. of Education <p>Other agencies or government entities with ancillary roles or functions (listed alphabetically):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Corrections • Dept. of Economic and Community Development • Dept. of Insurance • Dept. of Labor • Legislature • Mayors <p>Local entities (listed alphabetically):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery Communities • Family Resource Centers • Local school districts <p>Other players or constituencies (listed alphabetically):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Child care providers • Parents • Philanthropy
Positive opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One point of access for families • Authority (equal footing with other agency Commissioners; control of

with structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> funding, policy development, and data) • Changes to funding (increased authority, creating alignment of funding streams) • Raising visibility about birth to eight issues • Venue to discuss whole child needs • Create widespread ownership of shared vision • Keeping birth to five (especially infants and toddlers) out of the State Dept. of Education
Role of the State Dept. of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public education • Preschool in public schools • Increased preschool and K-3 alignment • Teacher certification and regulation • Communication with local school districts
Pitfalls to avoid and important notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpreparedness in dealing with potency of turf issues • Perpetuating the silo effect pervasive in state government • Inadvertently losing expertise of separate agencies due to consolidation under mega structure; be sure to farm existing expertise and include Care for Kids, Head Start, home visiting, School Readiness • Underestimating political resistance • Depending on goodwill; requires mandates, MOUs, and MOAs • Leaving out segments of the early childhood field • Underestimating the importance of buy-in from parents and the community level • Avoid marrying TA, mentoring, and support with licensing and regulation • Lack of transparency; input should be collected at all points of development

(b) Unsure about type of structure or where it should be housed but a new way of thinking and working is needed and form should follow function

Suggested at least eight times.

Functions, responsibilities, and authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased coordination of programs and services • Accountability (e.g., keeping system itself accountable for achieving identified child-based outcomes) • Detangle and better align funding streams (make it easier for providers) • Streamline reporting standards for providers
Agencies or partners that need to be	Same as those listed in “New agency”

involved	
Positive opportunities with structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevating the early childhood field; respecting providers as experts • Creating uniform standards and reporting requirements • Increasing alignment of preschool and K-3 will lead to smoother transitions; also better alignment of birth to five with K-12 • Increasing resources (for provider salaries, data systems, etc.) • Creating and defining birth to eight/third grade standards • Establishing a regional structure and through that process capturing the best assets the current system has to offer
Role of the State Dept. of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-3 • Increased alignment of preschool and K-3 • Dealing with academics and school districts • “Driver of quality” by providing the model for high-quality early education
Pitfalls to avoid and important notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving interagency collaboration is imperative because no matter how things are organized some functions will stay outside (e.g., Medicaid, health, foster children, adults services for parents) • Keep focus on shared goal (versus only structure) to de-emphasize turf issues • Too much bureaucracy stifles and prolongs decision making (in design process and in new system) • Include critical programs (Care for Kids, Head Start, home visiting, School Readiness) • Leadership should be diverse and reflective of populations • Always remember the importance of relationship building and trust • Weigh dissent appropriately (no structure will please everyone) • Misperception this can be dealt with in one fell swoop; it will take time and be messy at times • Making decisions that look good on paper but that do not really work in practice

(c) A robust division in the State Dept. of Education

Suggested at least seven times but in all but one case due to assumption this location was a “done deal.” All but one key informant who suggested this option expressed serious drawbacks. Additionally, a number of people explicitly said it should *not* be in the State Dept. of Education or lamented on the disadvantages of locating the new system in the Department while promoting a different option.

Functions, responsibilities, and authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better coordination of birth to eight services • Policy development and influence
Agencies or partners that	Same as those listed in “New agency”

need to be involved	
Positive opportunities with structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy place for external stakeholders to engage • Shared learning from K-12 best practices • Better linkages with superintendents (perceived as assets) and local education structures • Capitalize on creative and innovative thinking of current Education Commissioner <p>Raises profile and visibility of early care and education which can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of SDE's interagency efforts • Improvement of internal communication at SDE • Increased focus on and access to quality learning • Deeper understanding of the importance of the early years for the general public (education is a hook for many people and they will be more willing to pay attention to the early years)
Role of the State Dept. of Education	See "Functions, responsibilities, and authority" above
Pitfalls to avoid and important notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of capacity to adequately focus on early childhood issues given recently passed education reforms to implement • Singular focus on education • No focus on or prioritization of birth to three years old; must partner with Dept. Public Health, Dept. of Social Services, and Dept. of Developmental Services • Inability (due to infrastructure and cultural limitations) to integrate with wrap around services for young children and their families while simultaneously losing expertise of separate agencies • Current lack of confidence in SDE's ability to delivery services, especially for very young children • Critical system players may be resistant to accepting leadership • Much work is needed to establish buy-in from parents and local communities that think negatively of SDE • Current undesirable agency culture for some existing key stakeholders • Widespread unwillingness to work with SDE • SDE itself functions in an extreme silo and there are silos within SDE

(d) Singular leader with a small staff

Suggested at least three times. Perhaps housed at the Office of Public Management or the Governor's Office. Three distinguishing factors of this option are: (i) it is seen as permanent, thus different from option (f); (ii) it is small, thus different from option (g); and (iii) existing programs stay where they currently are, thus different than all the other options which assume consolidation of programs and services that are currently in different agencies.

Functions, responsibilities, and authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide increased coordination across all agencies and programs that deal with children ages birth to eight and their families • Increase alignment (of programs, services, funding, and standards) • Increase accountability (must have authority to do this)
Agencies or partners that need to be involved	Same as those listed in “New agency”
Positive opportunities with structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolls more players to take responsibility for outcomes in areas where they work best • Avoids system collapse of anything that would otherwise be moved with a different structure that consolidates • Dedicated capacity to increasing coordination, alignment, and accountability • Ability to develop depth and breadth of expertise on all programs and services impacting the success of children and families • Outside entity focused on goal, not turf
Role of the State Dept. of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-12 • Teacher certification • Overseeing early childhood programs that are located in public schools • Authority over kindergarten assessment has ripple effects. SDE must measure school readiness and make appropriate decisions regarding curriculum for early childhood programs and certification.
Pitfalls to avoid and important notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership must be very strong • Identifying a leader but not giving them adequate authority; “no one in charge” • There must be accountability for all entities involved • Staff must have reputation and authority to make all parties drive together in same direction • The existing department arrangement is working on some level • Moving all the pieces and creating a mega structure will create systems collapse • Do not make this another Head Start Collaboration State officer (with no authority for policy change) • State agency staff is already over burdened. This should be seen as a win not more burden. • Must be focused on consumers (e.g., family-driven) not driven by member organizations

(e) Public private partnership

Suggested at least three times.

Functions,

responsibilities, and authority	
Agencies or partners that need to be involved	Same as those listed in “New agency”
Positive opportunities with structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside entity focused on goal, not turf • Marry private sector resources, innovation, nimbleness, and adaptability with government’s expertise • Raise money more readily than state government • More sustainable through political transitions and opposition • Better leverage of active philanthropic community
Role of the State Dept. of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool; limited purview
Pitfalls to avoid and important notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer examination of and learning about North Carolina’s Smart Start and other state public private partnerships would be needed

(f) Temporarily located in the Office of Policy Management or the Governor’s Office

Suggested at least three times.

Functions, responsibilities, and authority	
Agencies or partners that need to be involved	Same as those listed in “New agency”
Positive opportunities with structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a neutral entity • Buys time to establish a more detailed plan; work out early glitches • Start fresh without pressures and resource requirements of starting a mega structure right away • Freedom to make mistakes, develop, and grow (“it’s like a baby that people want to nurture”) • Incubator for ideas and relationships
Role of the State Dept. of Education	
Pitfalls to avoid and important notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seen as temporary and no one buys-in, takes seriously, or gets invested • MOAs are needed • Relationships matter

(g) A robust division inside Office of Policy Management (on permanent basis)

Suggested at least three times.

Functions, responsibilities, and authority	Same as those listed in option (d).
Agencies or partners that need to be involved	Same as those listed in “New agency”
Positive opportunities with structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPM is skilled in making budget decisions • OPM has no problems with accountability (both in terms of its own accountability and holding other agencies accountable)
Role of the State Dept. of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preschool • Including preschool in definition of education success • Contribute resources • Embrace the value of birth to three services • Play supportive, but not lead, role with birth to three services
Pitfalls to avoid and important notes	

11. Three significant barriers to achieving a more comprehensive, coordinated system are: (a) distinct agency cultures; (b) fear of losing turf; and (c) fear of change.

When asked “what are the biggest obstacles to achieving a seamless system of programs and services for children and their families,” (see question 3.b. from Interview Protocol in Appendix A, p.38) the following three answers rose to the top most frequently.

- (a) A strong majority of key informants readily pointed out **distinct agency cultures** as a major obstacle to scale in order to achieve a more coordinated early care and education system. This means agencies hold certain values and assumptions; are committed to doing things a certain way; are not adaptable because of choice or bureaucracy; largely struggle to work well with others even if there are segments of talented staff who desire to be more collaborative; and work in extreme silos.

Some had **neutral observations** that:

- functioning in silos is a predictable result of the massiveness of state bureaucracy;

- the silo effect in early childhood that Connecticut experiences is not unique and is common to other issue areas (e.g., K-12 education) and in other states; and
- because programs are created from a specific context and history they are naturally more autonomous.

Further, some believe that the **lack of a regional system** (e.g., no local-to-state intermediary like counties and different agencies use different regional territories) heightens the silo or “cylinder” effect of both private and public programs because it is difficult for state entities to collaborate with 169 individual cities or towns.⁶ Conversely, it is difficult for individual cities or towns to coordinate with state agencies.

Others **lamented that the silo effect is partly** due to:

- unwillingness to cooperate with other players due to apathy or hostility; and
- misperceptions of the cultures of other agencies or constituencies.

(b) Fear of losing turf. The importance of turf was recognized prominently by key informants of various vantage points (e.g., vested and non-vested government players, service providers, and policy thinkers) as a potent obstruction to progress towards a more coordinated, collaborative system (see key theme 6.a.ii.).

While some say reducing duplication is a desired outcome, it was often discussed in vague, not specific terms. When vested players spoke of their own purview it was to explain the unique and high quality ways they meet needs and/or how their work should be maintained or enhanced. While this may be a natural and understandable response in anticipation of losing market share, which one key informant said was like telling someone they are not doing a good job, it may also be due to lack of knowledge about other programs and services, given the silo effect outlined above in key theme 11.a. and lack of regionalization.

Some suggested that an **inventory or environmental scan would be helpful** in describing the current universe of programs and services that span the age spectrum (e.g., birth to eight years old) and intensity of service spectrum (e.g., the all, some, and few model from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University where all is universal, some is selected and prevention, and few is early intervention).

⁶ Wikipedia. (n.d.). *List of Towns in Connecticut*. Retrieved on July 28, 2012 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_towns_in_Connecticut.

- (c) **Fear of change.** As noted above in key theme 11.a., key informants believe agency staff are committed to doing things a certain way. Similarly, they believe programs prefer familiarity.

Many recognized that change takes a lot of effort and energy. A few commented that Connecticut is great at planning and less successful with implementation. Although some recognize that systems change is hard work, they are unclear to what extent (e.g., the duration and depth of the effort they must participate in).

How the system design and implementation process is managed matters greatly to key informants as it relates to their own level of involvement and sense of being valued, establishing buy-in among critical and broad players, and the perceived success and therefore sustainability of a new system.

It was evident during the interviews that most or all vested players have some level of fear related to an uncertain future, loss of authority through centralization, and/or a change in the familiar way they are doing things.

Some who have experienced or witnessed clashing of divergent viewpoints during program expansions, policy development, and/or implementation of policy changes said there will always be a way for constituencies to blow up progress either through the legislative process or through applying public pressure. A few noted that specifically the provider community and State Department of Education were the most adversarial.

Yet it is important to remember that there was clear, widespread agreement about two fundamental starting points. One, the current system is ineffective and is failing families (key theme 1). Two, a *high-quality*, comprehensive, and coordinated early care and education system is needed in Connecticut and every child should have access to it (key theme 2). Furthermore, some resistance can be expected even from the most well-intentioned partners.

12. There is strong skepticism that the State Department of Education has the capacity to preside over the early care and education system and manage the necessary interagency coordination

Key informants had strong opinions about the State Department of Education. The main discussion points were as follows.

- **Limited capacity.** Key informants acknowledge that the newly passed education reforms will require much work from the Department to implement. They worry this leaves little bandwidth to address the massive undertaking of presiding over a new, better coordinated early care and education system.
- **Positive perception of current Education Commissioner.** Commissioner Pryor is recognized as a collaborator by many key informants and someone who could potentially help break down the interagency barriers that are prevalent in the state agency culture in general. They also acknowledge there are limitations to what one leader can achieve.
- **Worry historical disappointments will be repeated.** Without seeing examples of successful implementation or collaborative involvement in early care and education items, key informants are not confident the Department has the ability to successfully preside over the new early care and education system.
- **Fear birth to three will not be fully embraced.** In general, it can be said that securing ample support for birth to three services is something many states across the nation struggle with. Key informants fear that the Department will be very challenged to fully understand, appreciate, and embrace the unique nature of birth to three services.
- **Ability and readiness for interagency collaboration.** This is related to: capacity issues; comprehension of birth to three services; level of valuing early care and education; and the Department's commitment to take on the difficult work of on-going interagency collaboration. Key informants expressed strong concern about whether the Department is positioned well and/or incentivized to capitalize on the opportunity ahead of leading and helping develop a new, better coordinated system.
- **Feelings of distrust towards the Department specifically and towards any coordinating entity in general.** As noted above, key informants had very strong opinions about the Department. While it is critical to take those comments into consideration, it is also important to note that there is a generic wariness because it is difficult for a variety of reasons to consolidate resources and authority into one agency, no matter which one it is. It is fair to say that some of the wariness directed at the Department would be there with any operating agency.

Some observations about the State Department of Education are threaded throughout key theme 10 (particularly in option 10.c.) which focuses on key informants' opinions about potential structures and locations for a new system of early childhood. As supported by the information in key theme 10, **nearly every key informant acknowledges that the State Department of Education must play an important role in the new, coordinated system of early childhood given its authority over grades K-3.** Yet they were mostly resigned to rather

than enthused by the prospect or likelihood of the new entity being housed in the State Department of Education.

Some key informants mentioned (key theme 6.a.ii.) that they have faith in the current Education Commissioner due to his value of collaboration and willingness to cross silos in order to achieve better outcomes for children. Yet this is counterbalanced by concerns that he is spread too thin and may not be able to address important priorities urgently (e.g., he has not filled many of his executive positions), that his values of collaboration are not shared by his staff who actually implement policies and programs, and that he lacks comprehensive knowledge of early childhood care and education.

There were blanket, negative statements about the reputation of State Department of Education in regards to:

- **Inability to work well with others** (e.g., agencies, communities, parents in general, and at-risk families).
- Lack of system wide competence about **non-academic early childhood issues**.
- **Unwillingness to embrace non-preschool priorities** (e.g., social and emotional development in birth to five and the needs of infants and toddlers ages birth to three).
- The perceived preference for making **unilateral decisions** and enforcing uninformed, non-vetted policies on families and the local communities.
- **History of poor performance** as it relates to anything birth to five, specifically strong disappointment about their handling of the kindergarten assessment, their past administration of Birth to Three (IDEA Part C), and their current administration of preschool.

Related to the reputation issues, key informants believe **the State Early Childhood Planning Team has a perception problem due to its proximity to State Department of Education**.

People think the Governor's real or perceived preference for the new entity to be housed in the State Department of Education is counter-productive to the planning focus of PA 11-181. Many complained that it took too long to get a planner hired, that the team is housed in the State Department of Education and treated like Department staff, and that now the planning team has such a short time to do research and make recommendations since there was a year to year and half delay in getting them hired. They fear these factors will influence any recommendation to house the new entity in the State Department of Education. Yet many said they trust and like the Planning Team.

A neutral observation made by many key informants is there is a capacity issue with the State Department of Education given that the newly passed education reforms will be the focus of its work starting with the very near future and beyond.

The State Department of Education was discussed so frequently (far more than any other state agency) because:

- There was a specific question about it: “What do you think the role of the State Department of Education should be” in regards to a state structure that can deliver on-going, comprehensive, integrated early childhood services (per question 5.c. of the Interview Protocol, see Appendix A, p.38).
- Key informants had firsthand negative past experiences and/or had heard of negative experiences from the families they serve.
- There is the general presumption due to real or perceived preference by the Governor to house the new structure in the State Department of Education. There has been time to react to this option as though it were real thus evoking the defensiveness and fear outlined in key theme 11.
- It is a large governmental structure with jurisdiction over public education that is a topic many people have strong opinions about in general.

13. The window of opportunity is now.

Key informants recognize that the time is now for instigating change mostly due to two reasons:

- (a) The planning process necessitated by PA 11-181**, which calls for a coordinated system to be in place on July 1, 2013.

A number of key informants see the work of the **State Early Learning Planning Team** (Myra Jones-Taylor, Mara Saladi, and Carlota Schechter) as a critical ingredient to the success of the new system due to its ability to raise the profile of early care and education systems planning work and its capacity to communicate with and perhaps influence the Governor’s Office.

Yet related to key theme 12, they believe the Planning Team has an image or perception problem due to its location in the State Department of Education. Several key informants said the Governor wants the new entity to be housed in the State Department of Education and does not want to create a new, free standing entity of equal stature with other agencies. This was a common comment made by key informants who either heard the Governor or high-ranking government officials make

comments to that effect, or heard second-hand about such comments. While there may be other pressures at play, those were not discussed by key informants.

If the results of the Planning Team's work show that the new entity should be housed in the State Department of Education, they believe it would be in large part due to the Governor's preferences rather than information learned through the planning process. However, it is important to note that most people who mentioned the Planning Team spoke positively about the team members' expertise, competence, authenticity in valuing diverse stakeholders, and willingness to engage with diverse stakeholders.

Additionally one key informant cautioned that it is unreasonable to expect the Planning Team to "save the day" with a cure-all plan. As another key informant said: "no matter how good the planning is, this work is always hard no matter what" because it is complicated and requires on-going evaluation for effectiveness and appropriate course adjustments.

(b) Governor Malloy's leadership in regards to increasing early childhood investments (e.g., 1,000 slot School Readiness expansion and investment in Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System) and policies as well as creating a culture of interagency collaboration in state government.

The Governor's support of early learning is valued and seen as an asset. It offers an opportunity to build something substantial in the next two years.

Yet this also creates **two tensions** for key informants.

- (i) the political realities that the design work will be driven by his vision** (e.g., to house the new entity in the State Department of Education);
- (ii) the urgency** to get something established before his term is up in December 2014 may mean **the wisest, most strategic decisions will not be made in regards to the function and sustainability of the system.**

Key informants agree the Governor is politically brave (as noted in key theme 6.a.ii.) but some believe his depth of comprehensive knowledge on early childhood issues is limited and that he prefers or is set on the new entity being housed in the State Department of Education (as noted in point 13.a. above).

Other indicators key informants said show that this is a time period ripe for making improvements are:

- the increased awareness from legislators and the public about return on investment, neuroscience, and the importance of quality early care and education;
- strong interest and involvement from the philanthropic community; and
- increased will from the early childhood field, parents, local communities, and the public to transform the system.

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

*** CONFIDENTIAL ***

Connecticut Research Protocol

Interview Details

Key Informant Name	
Title, Organization	
Contact information	
Interview date, time	
Interviewer	

Introduction

This phone interview is part of an information gathering process sponsored by the Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative to inform early care and education systems improvement efforts. The Collaborative is a group of 14 funders* from around the state who have joined together in a partnership with the State of Connecticut to achieve the goal of a coordinated system to serve children birth to eight and align policies, responsibilities, practices and services to improve positive outcomes for children ages birth to eight and their families as mandated by [Public Act 11-181](#). The Collaborative is working with the State's Early Childhood Planning Team on this effort.

Through phone interviews conducted by the [BUILD Initiative](#) we will be gathering input from a wide range of people with diverse vantage points who have valuable knowledge, experience, and interest in early childhood (defined as children birth to eight) to inform the next steps in design of a comprehensive system. For instance, as we work in partnership with the State to achieve the mandate of Public Act 11-181, these interviews will help provide a clearer, multi-dimensional picture of early childhood in Connecticut as well as a deeper understanding of how diverse initiatives across agencies can be successfully connected.

The information resulting from the interviews, such as key themes, will be made available to the State's planning process under Public Act 11-181, calling for a coordinated system of early care and education by July, 2013. **All interviews will be treated as confidential and no identifying information will be provided to the funders or to the state planning team.**

Your thoughts, observations and ideas will be very helpful to us in this effort. Thank you for your participation. The project sponsors greatly appreciate the gift of time and insight you are offering.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

* The Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative is comprised of: The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, Fairfield County Community Foundation; American Savings Foundation; The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven; The Grossman Family Foundation; Emily Hall Tremain Foundation; Children's Fund of Connecticut; The Fund for Greater Hartford; Connecticut Community Foundation; United Way of Central & Northeastern Connecticut; Liberty Bank Foundation; Community Foundation of Greater New Britain; Connecticut Network of Community Foundations.

Questions

- (1) Please briefly describe your role and key areas of focus in early childhood work in Connecticut.
- (2) In thinking about the needs of young children and their families, what do you think are the three most important goals for a statewide, comprehensive early care and education system?
 - a. How would you characterize your state's current status in measuring up to those goals? For instance, where is the current system succeeding and falling short?
- (3) When you think about Connecticut's current system of early childhood programs and services at both the state and local levels, what is working in terms of structure, resources, and accountability?
 - a. What are your recommendations for improvement? For instance, are there gaps or duplications that need to be addressed?
 - b. In your mind what are the biggest obstacles to achieving a seamless system of programs and services for children and their families?
- (4) Still thinking about the current system, what assets need to be maintained or enhanced?
[Interviewer note: Let them define assets, but examples are partnerships, collaborations, leveraging, etc.]
 - a. Are there any key early childhood initiatives you see as particularly successful that need to be maintained or enhanced? If so, how could these initiatives be integrated to support a comprehensive approach?

- (5) When you think of a state structure that can deliver on-going, comprehensive, integrated early childhood services, where do you see it being housed and what should its responsibilities be? [Interviewer note: In notes differentiate between internal structure functions versus how the entity should interact with external stakeholders.]
- a. What would be the positive opportunities with this structure?
 - b. Who are the agencies and/or partners that should be involved? How can they be involved in meaningful ways that ensure a commitment of time, resources, and their integration into the system?
 - c. Specifically, what do you think the role of the State Department of Education should be?
 - d. In general, what are the pitfalls that should be avoided?
- (6) Is there anything else you think is important to mention that we did not have the chance to discuss?

Appendix B: Thank You Email to Key Informant

Subject line:

Thank you, Collaborative research project

Email Language:

Dear ,

Thank you on behalf of the Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative for taking the time to speak with me [today, yesterday, this week]. The input you provided was very valuable in informing the next steps in the design of a comprehensive early care and education system aimed at improving positive outcomes for young children and their families. As a reminder, the information you shared will be treated as confidential and no identifying information will be provided to the funders or state planning team.

Project sponsors appreciate the gift of time and insight that you have provided. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me and for all that you do on behalf of children and families.

Best Regards,

Kristin Wiggins or Karen Ponder

Consultant, BUILD Initiative

Connecticut Early Childhood Funders Collaborative research project



**A Quality Rating and Improvement System for Connecticut
QRIS Workgroup Recommendations
June 2013**

Executive Summary

The experiences children have early in life—and the environments in which they have them—shape their developing brain architecture and strongly affect whether they grow up to be healthy, productive members of society.¹

Purpose

All families want – and their children deserve – the best possible start in life. Scientific research confirms that early experiences – at home or outside of the home – are directly linked to early learning outcomes, foundational skills and lifelong achievement. Quality early care and education that is consistent, developmentally appropriate and emotionally supportive has a positive impact on children, families, schools and communities.²

The Early Childhood Education Cabinet is committed to the work of developing a comprehensive early childhood education system that includes a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that promotes high-quality early learning experiences for all children, in every setting, every year. The goals of Connecticut’s QRIS are to provide families with the information they need to make informed choices and to provide all early childhood settings with the tools needed to improve quality, so that all children statewide are provided with the opportunity to have high quality early learning experiences.

In order to ensure that all children in Connecticut receive quality early learning experiences, the Workgroup strongly recommends that the QRIS include all settings, whether they are publicly or privately funded, including child care centers, family child care programs, and license-exempt programs.

¹ National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2010). *Early Experiences Can Alter Gene Expression and Affect Long-Term Development: Working Paper No. 10*. Retrieved from www.developingchild.harvard.edu

² Pediatrics, 2005, 115; 187

Process

The process of creating a QRIS for CT is guided by Public Act 11-181, which sets forth the parameters of a coordinated system for early childhood in Connecticut. Among other features of the system, PA 11-181 includes language to “create, implement and maintain a quality rating and improvement system that covers home-based, center-based and school-based early child care and learning.”

In an effort to move this legislation forward, the QRIS Workgroup was established by the Early Childhood Cabinet in the spring of 2012. At the Cabinet’s request the workgroup developed plans to identify the actions and activities necessary to design a QRIS, establish a robust monitoring and rating process, develop QRIS Standards, promote quality improvement within and across levels of the system, promote use of information by communities and families and develop sustainability plans to ensure the consistent and long-term existence of the system. The development of the recommendations for the Connecticut QRIS is grounded in a preceding report of the 2008 CT QRIS Work Group and Connecticut’s 2011 Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application.

In September 2012, the Early Childhood Planning Team, established through the aforementioned legislation to create a plan for Connecticut’s early childhood system, requested that the QRIS Workgroup complete a set of recommendations for a QRIS with the strict deadline of October 30, 2012. The Workgroup launched a process of meetings, with the help of the national Childcare State Systems Specialists, to achieve this goal. On November 15, 2012, the first iteration of recommendations was presented to the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet and Early Childhood Planning Team Director. This presentation is available at http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/uploads/6/3/3/7/6337139/qrisc_presentation_df_11_13_12.pptx_1.pdf

The QRIS Workgroup met to refine and clarify its recommendations through the spring of 2013. The recommendations that follow in this Report of the Early Childhood Cabinet's QRIS Workgroup, June 2013, are the result of that work. This report includes the

- Guiding Principles established by the Workgroup, which serve as a foundation to the QRIS system; and the
- recommendations addressing these topics in the QRIS: Governance, Structure, Standards, Licensing, Accreditation and Approval, Rating and Monitoring, Subsidy, Incentives, and Phase In.

Guiding Principles

The QRIS Workgroup developed and adopted Guiding Principles relating to children and families, early care and education programs, settings and systems as the foundational tenets to the recommendations for the Connecticut QRIS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Governance

A governing entity must be designated for the QRIS. In addition, a mechanism for regular communication with providers in the QRIS is also a key component to effective governance. Connecticut is in the process of developing a new governance structure for early childhood and currently has limited infrastructure to support the needed governance capacity for a QRIS. The design of that governance structure will be highly dependent on the outcome of pending legislation for an Office of Early Childhood that may or may not include child care licensing within the purview of that Office. Currently, the State Department of Education is charged with developing the QRIS, with the anticipated transfer of that charge to the Office of Early Childhood with the passage of the pending legislation.

Structure

The Connecticut QRIS will be a mandatory block system. The Workgroup strongly recommends a QRIS that demands high quality early learning experiences for ***all*** children in every setting resulting in the recommendation that involvement be mandatory for all settings. In addition, the criteria and indicators within each block must be achieved prior to ascending to the next level. Participants at each level are eligible to receive targeted training and technical assistance to assist in on-going quality improvement.

Standards

The recommended components for the Connecticut QRIS standards are Health and Safety, Learning Environment, Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development, Family Engagement and Support, and Leadership and Management. The standards will be reinforced by criteria and indicators of quality as programs elevate from level to level.

Licensing

Connecticut's licensing regulations should be held as the baseline threshold of quality for the QRIS. The development of standards, criteria and indicators should be established in relationship to each level of the QRIS to build upon that licensing baseline for on-going quality improvement. The licensing system has been identified by the workgroup as a potential mechanism for communication to all licensed programs regarding the QRIS. Connecticut is also embarking on a needs assessment study of the licensing system that will be conducted by the National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA). The findings and recommendations from that study will directly impact how licensing procedures are implemented moving forward.

Accreditation and Approval System

An infrastructure of national accreditation bodies can serve as cost-effective monitoring and quality assurances for the QRIS. Connecticut recognizes national accreditation and approval systems as a means to define expectations for high quality early care and education settings. The accreditation and approval entities currently recognized in Connecticut include, but are not limited to, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation and Head Start. Processes should also be developed to identify and approve additional accreditation bodies for use in the QRIS.

Rating and Monitoring

An effective QRIS is highly dependent on an infrastructure of regular and on-going monitoring, accomplished through a combination of self-report, quality audits and utilization of external accreditation approval systems. In addition, it is necessary to select tools and utilize them for the purpose they were designed, in their entirety, not in subscale, to enable valid and reliable ratings.

Subsidy

The Connecticut QRIS will include an integrated system of tiered reimbursement, with the child care subsidy program as an essential component. A sub-group with expertise of the federal and state mandates related to the child care subsidy should be put in place to inform the alignment of the subsidy system with the QRIS. Like many other states, Connecticut's child care assistance subsidy system is governed by the Child Care Development Fund Plans submitted to the federal Office of Child Care by the designated lead agency in the state. In addition, Connecticut recently passed legislation that enables providers receiving child care subsidy to organize and potentially participate in collective bargaining.

Incentives

The Connecticut QRIS will provide incentives that are both financial and non-financial. The QRIS will incent providers of all care settings to provide high quality early learning experiences for all children.

- An effective QRIS provides sufficient supports to families and programs.
- Publicly-funded and non-publicly funded providers should receive training, technical assistance, and incentives to promote continuous improvement and sustained quality.
- The base rate of reimbursement and the incentive package should be based upon an established formula.

While the feasibility of program quality improvements are dependent on financial supports, training and technical assistance can also incent increased knowledge and professionalism of the workforce. In addition, the QRIS is a means to promote the selection of high-quality early learning experience by families, which will in turn foster the demand for high quality early learning programs and ignite a market driven momentum for increased opportunities for high quality programs. A multi-dimensional incentive structure is a key component of the QRIS.

Phase In: Development and Implementation

It is recommended that the CT QRIS be implemented in phases, with an initial pilot phase that is guided by the expertise of a researcher to monitor reliability and validity of the system. The Workgroup has identified a number of projects that will be vital to the implementation of QRIS, including but not limited to, the development of standards—with criteria and indicators, the selection and training of reliable raters, the selection of an evaluator for the system, the development of the technological infrastructure to support the system, and on-going consumer education on the QRIS.

The Pilot Phase should be voluntary and by invitation with the phases thereafter being mandatory, starting with licensed center- and family-based providers. The final phase should include the licensed-exempt programs and family friend and neighbor care providers. The Workgroup strongly recommends a QRIS that demands high quality early learning experiences for ***all*** children in every setting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The accomplishments of the workgroup were informed by guidance from the Administration for Children and Families Office of Child Care Training and Technical Assistance Team. In addition, the current recommendations were informed by the work of many who preceded the workgroup in their efforts to offer recommendations for a Connecticut QRIS. To every extent possible, the Connecticut QRIS Draft Recommendations of 2008 and the Connecticut Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge 2011 Application were utilized as references for the recommendations of this workgroup. Finally, without the commitment of the current workgroup members, much of the work done to date would not have been possible.

WORKGROUP MEMBERSHIP

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Introduction

The 2013 recommendations for a Connecticut Quality Rating and Improvement System were developed by a workgroup consisting of a cross-section of early childhood stakeholders. The components of this system will drive program quality in all early childhood settings in Connecticut including publicly or privately funded child care centers, family child care programs and license-exempt programs by providing

- supports and incentives to programs and practitioners;
- information to families who utilize these settings for their children; and
- public ratings that define and recognize increasing levels of quality.

These recommendations, organized on the following pages by topic area, establish a coordinated and systemic approach to continuous quality improvement for the benefit of all children in all settings. Their intent is to establish equivalent but not identical criteria across settings and age groups, so that program quality is raised through a series of logical and well-defined increments appropriate to the type of setting and driven by accessible, purposeful, specific interventions.

The recommendations address the operational and foundational components of a QRIS. They are not designed to be implemented as disparate parts, but rather in a sequence, which builds a fully-articulated system offering early childhood practitioners opportunities and incentives to engage in meaningful program improvement efforts. This is how higher quality will be achieved and maintained in all settings and how a system of supports for programs and practitioners will contribute to the healthy development and future achievement of Connecticut's young children.

The workgroup recommendations address the following topic areas:

- Governance
- Structure
- Standards
- Licensing
- Accreditation and Approval
- Rating and Monitoring
- Subsidy
- Incentives
- Phase-In

A set of Guiding Principles relating to children and families, early care and education programs, settings and systems sets the foundational tenets to the recommendations for the Connecticut QRIS. Each topic area includes a rationale with recommendations. The appendix summarizes

the citations and resources utilized to inform each topic area. It must be noted that many of these topics are components of existing work in other domains of Connecticut's emerging early childhood system and that collaboration and communication will be integral to the successful unification of all of the parts of the QRIS.

Finally, a commitment to the development of Connecticut's QRIS is needed to ensure that the work is intentional and sequenced. This would build upon existing efforts, and scaffold the development and implementation of the strategies and recommendations detailed in this document. These recommendations, including a necessary phase in approach, will set Connecticut on the path to the development of a QRIS that promotes quality for all children in all settings.

"Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning." - Benjamin Franklin

QRIS Guiding Principles

These Guiding Principles represent foundational tenets of a Connecticut QRIS.

With regard to **Children and Families**, Connecticut's Quality Rating and Improvement System will,

1. Provide families with tools and resources to inform decisions when choosing early care and education programs.
2. Assist families in choosing high quality programs.

With regard to **Early Care and Education Programs and Settings**, Connecticut's Quality Rating and Improvement System will,

3. Rate programs using comparable standards that demonstrate high quality across all settings.
4. Reflect the diversity of settings while also holding programs accountable to the process and standards of the system.

With regard to **Systems**, Connecticut's Quality Rating and Improvement System will,

5. Simplify and reduce duplication in reporting, and respond efficiently to the provider community.
6. Provide financial incentives and other supports.
7. Separate technical assistance/support from enforcement/monitoring.
8. Provide standards that 'make something happen' and are not redundant to standards in other systems used in the QRIS.
9. Make use of local community organizations to develop collaborations to promote quality and minimize duplication.
10. Establish and maintain a system that can be sustained over time.

QRIS Workgroup

Recommendations related to Governance

Rationale:

The Governance structure is responsible to ensure that guiding principles are imbedded and upheld to ensure the integrity, objectivity and validity of the Connecticut QRIS system. There is limited infrastructure currently in place to meet the capacity of a QRIS in Connecticut.

Recommendations

- 1. Clarify the role of the proposed Office of Early Childhood and Early Childhood Cabinet as it relates to governing the Quality Rating and Improvement System.**
- 2. Establish a liaison or ombudsman to ensure alignment, coordination, communication and collaboration between system stakeholders.**
- 3. Establish a system for on-going communication with licensed center and family child care providers, licensed-exempt and family friend and neighbor providers.**
- 4. Separate the monitoring and technical assistance arms of the QRIS.**
 - Consideration should be given to how the role of consultants – as currently included in licensing – can be strengthened to support the monitoring process;
 - Consultants should be linked to the reporting mechanisms within the QRIS, which allows for reporting of findings to the programs;
 - The QRIS, along with child care licensing, will bear the responsibility and cost of monitoring and compliance.
- 5. Fund the infrastructure required to address the data, monitoring and technical assistance needs of a successful QRIS (e.g. data systems that will need to accommodate registration of providers from all settings and sectors).**

QRIS Workgroup Recommendations Related to Structure

Rationale:

Children are exposed to high quality early learning experiences when indicators of quality are reflected in early care settings. Those indicators of quality should not be optional. Therefore, the Connecticut QRIS will be a block system rather than a point system. The criteria and indicators within each block must be achieved prior to ascending to the next level. Participants at each level are eligible to receive targeted training and technical assistance to assist in on-going quality improvement.

Recommendations

1. Create a block system with a hierarchical structure for the Rating and Improvement System for the Connecticut QRIS.

- A Building Block approach requires a participant to meet the level of rating in all categories of standards before receiving that rating.

2. Establish requirements within levels

Entry Level

- Register in the QRIS data system.

Level One

- Licensed programs (automatically enrolled in QRIS data system by linking existing data bases);
- Enrollment in the workforce data system will be required. (e.g. the Registry);
- Scholarship eligibility will be dependent on a planned course of study to promote alignment with the framework of early childhood teacher core knowledge and competency.

Level Two

- To include a process of self-report, with random quality audits by an approved external entity.

Level Three

- Programs at this level have staff with defined course of study and professional development plans.
- These programs would be accreditation applicants with a deadline set for submission of accreditation materials to approved national organizations within one year.
- Program assessment will be completed by an external, reliable assessor. Program must achieve cut scores on QRIS assessment and document progress on improvement plans.

Level Four

- Accredited programs (e.g. NAEYC, NAFCC), and Head Start/Early Head Start with no federally defined deficiencies or non-compliances, including Head Start/Early Head Start in family child care programs.
- A formalized process to review accreditation entities in order to recognize national monitoring systems and use external measures that reflect consistent levels of quality so that parents make informed choices.

QRIS Workgroup Recommendations related to Standards

Rationale:

QRIS Standards are norms or expressed expectations of program quality. Criteria are further specifications of a standard, providing finer definition. QRIS has the potential to harmonize and unite the range of practitioner standards and the various program standards and to integrate early learning guidelines (ELGs) into practice. QRIS also have the potential to promote reflective practice and continuous quality improvement.

Recommendations

1. The Connecticut QRIS standards reflect the following components:



2. Develop the criteria and indicators that define Connecticut's five standards of the QRIS.

- Contract a consultant to direct and facilitate this process.
- Represent the criteria and indicators progressively within the tiers.
- Be inclusive of different settings, populations, abilities, socio-economic status, and cultures.
- Criteria for different settings must be equivalent but may not be identical.
- Family engagement should be explicitly embedded as a priority in the standards, criteria and indicators.

3. Standards and criteria need to be:

- Understandable and significant – participants and consumers know what the standards mean and that they matter.
- Evidence-based – there is substantial evidence that a standard is related to program quality and/or positive child development, and ultimately to child outcomes such as school readiness.
- Measureable and feasible to monitor – standards can be monitored well considering accuracy, cost and time;
- Progressive – items are not 'yes/no,' but rather represent gradations of improving practice from acceptable, good, better to best.

QRIS Workgroup

Recommendations related to Licensing

Rationale:

Licensing rules are the threshold of quality care, upon which other quality enhancements are built, and substantially influence the larger early care and education (ECE) system. (National Association for Regulatory Administration)

Recommendations

- 1. Establish licensing as a baseline standard of program quality that provides external, reliable, statewide monitoring of programs.**
 - Build understanding of licensing regulations as a basic level of quality, not an optimal level.
 - Identify barriers to licensing.
 - Assess the ability of license-exempt programs to achieve regulatory compliance.
 - Increase the frequency and reliability of DPH inspections.
- 2. Incorporate all of the settings where children are served. Include licensed and license-exempt, center and family-based providers as outlined in the Levels and Phases.**
- 3. Study the feasibility of the current child day care licensing system to act as a mechanism for communication to all licensed programs regarding the QRIS.**
- 4. Assess existing monitoring systems (state and local) to determine their ability to contribute to monitoring licensing standards and compliance in QRIS.**

QRIS Workgroup
Recommendations related to Accreditation & Approval

Rationale:

The Connecticut QRIS incorporates nationally recognized systems of program recognition to provide consistent levels of accountability and clear, research-based standards and criteria for programs at its highest levels of recognized quality. These accreditation systems, along with other approved systems recognized by the state, are external entities which incorporate criteria that assist in defining Connecticut's expectations for high quality programs, and provide cost effective monitoring and quality assurance systems through their infrastructure.

Utilizing these national systems in Connecticut's QRIS:

- *Provides families with the opportunity to make high quality choices across a variety of programs;*
- *Improves parent understanding of high quality; and*
- *Establishes consistency across the various settings, geographic regions, demographics and family income levels present in our state.*

Recommendations

- 1. Establish a process for review and approval of accreditation bodies at the highest level of the QRIS, with coordination of recognized accreditation systems by Commissioners statewide.**
- 2. The monitoring system reflects the following related to Accreditation:**
 - Levels three and four will primarily utilize existing accreditation and Head Start approval systems.
 - The monitoring system is informed by monitoring through the Department of Public Health, Department of Children and Families, national accreditation bodies and Head Start.
 - Program improvement plans reflect recommendations from accreditation, Head Start and approval system reports.
 - A rubric is utilized to assess accreditation and Head Start reports.

QRIS Workgroup

Recommendations related to Rating and Monitoring

Rationale:

Taken together, standards are used to assign ratings to programs that participate in QRIS, providing parents, policymakers, funders, and the public with information about the level of quality [of a program].

Accountability and monitoring processes provide ways to determine how well programs meet QRIS standards, assign ratings, and verify ongoing compliance. Monitoring also provides a basis of accountability for programs, parents, and funders by creating benchmarks for measuring quality improvement. (US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, QRIS Resource Guide)

Recommendations

- 1. The monitoring system is informed by the state agencies' reporting systems, approved national accreditation bodies and Head Start monitoring.**
- 2. Licensed programs enter the QRIS at Level One and are monitored by an external entity to advance into other levels.**
- 3. Monitoring by an external entity will confirm achievement of higher levels.**
- 4. An integrated data system needs to inform and flag non-compliances, with a mechanism to evaluate significance of non-compliance and inform the QRIS levels.**
- 5. Establish an approved list of valid and reliable tools.**
- 6. Criterion will be monitored through self-report, using assessments from the approved tools.**
- 7. Levels Three and Four will primarily utilize existing accreditation and Head Start approval and support systems.**

- 8. Tools are to be utilized in their entirety, rather than by subscale.**
- 9. An integrated data system shall identify and flag non-compliance.**
- 10. Establish a mechanism to evaluate the degree of non-compliance and the impact on the QRIS levels.**
- 11. Program improvement plans shall include, but are not limited to, recommendations from accreditation, Head Start and approval system reports.**

QRIS Workgroup

Recommendations related to Subsidy System

Rationale:

Increasing payments to providers should be a top priority. States need to ensure that programs have the resources to hire well-qualified staff, purchase books and toys, and do everything else necessary to build a high-quality program and offer our most vulnerable children the early learning opportunities they need to succeed.

(Helen Blank, National Women's Law Center, Director of Child Care and Early Learning)

A priority for the Office of Child Care is to ensure that parents receiving subsidies have access to high quality child care arrangements across different types of providers that foster healthy development and learning for children. In order to be meaningful, the parental choice requirement should give parents high quality child care options.

(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Policy Interpretation Question, January 5, 2011.)

Recommendations

- 1. Establish a subgroup with current knowledge of the federal and state mandates related to Connecticut’s subsidy system.**
- 2. Integrate the child care subsidy system with tiered reimbursement into the QRIS, linking the child care subsidy reimbursement rates to quality levels.**
- 3. Review and update reimbursements of all public funding streams to increase the base rate of subsidy to 75% of the current market rate, as recommended by the national Child Care Development Fund.**
- 4. Determine the threshold for classifying “non-publicly funded” center and family child care providers that enroll children receiving *Care4Kids* funding.**
 - Specifically, how many children receiving Care4Kids could a center or home enroll before they are considered “publicly-funded?” Is it a number or a percentage of their enrollment?
 - Create a formula for financial incentives by levels, aligned with the cost of implementing standards, starting at Level One.
 - Take into account pending collective bargaining agreements.

QRIS Workgroup

Recommendations related to Incentives

Rationale:

An essential element of a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) is the support offered to child care providers to assist them in understanding and meeting the standards and quality criteria. States may already have support services in place that can be linked to the QRIS, or they may need to invest in new services, or both. Support services include professional development opportunities and targeted technical assistance approaches, as well as financial incentives for programs and individual staff.

(Quality Rating and Improvement System Resource Guide. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families.)

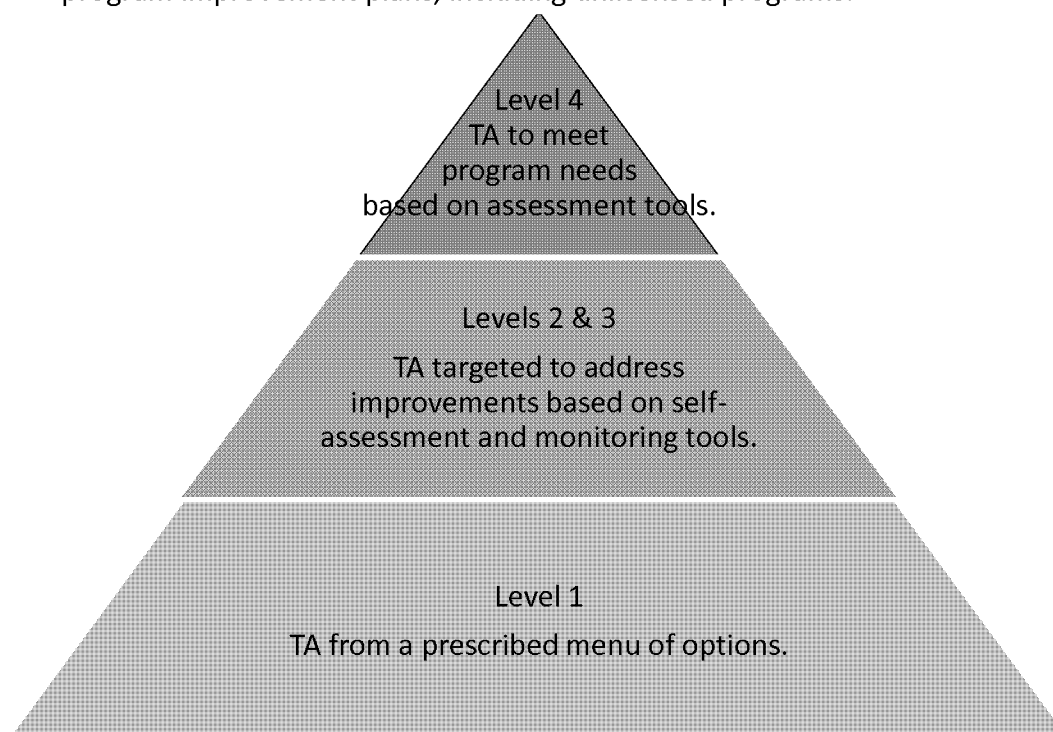
Recommendations

1. Incentives take many forms including market-driven incentives, technical assistance and financing; and create demand for services at higher levels by educating providers, the general public and families about the importance of quality early care and education for all Connecticut’s children. In accordance with the Framework for Incentives provided by the QRIS Learning Network, the workgroup recommends the following supports for the Connecticut QRIS:

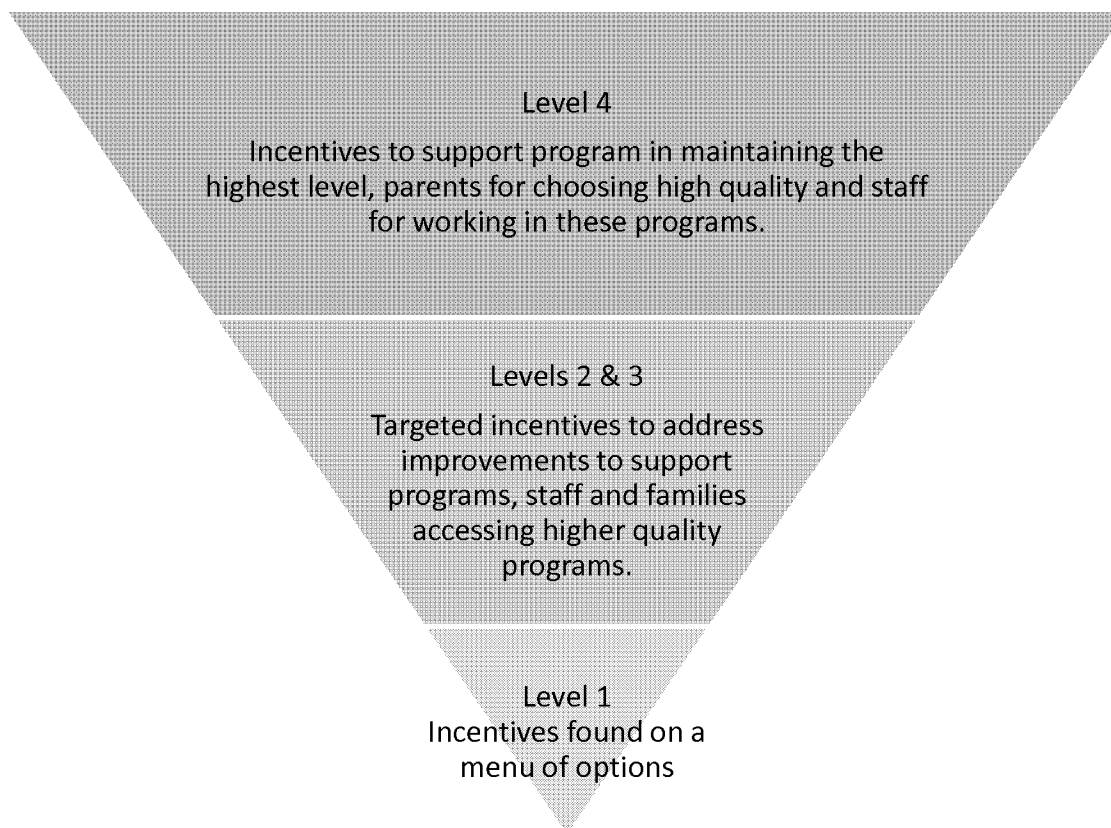
- Supply-side interventions that link QRIS standards and participation with:
 - Program supports including technical assistance and coaching;
 - Professional Development Supports including training and scholarships;
 - Financial Supports including grants, bonuses, differential reimbursement, wage supplements and tax credits.
- Demand-side intervention designed to influence consumer early care choices by providing:
 - an easy-to-understand consumer guide to quality (levels and rating) and public education to assure consumers understand its meaning and use;
 - links between higher quality care choices and financial incentives such as tax credits and differential reimbursement.

2. Provide programs with the tools to successfully move up the QRIS levels.

- Provide non-financial incentives in the form of technical assistance to raise the knowledge and professionalism of the workforce, promote quality, and create a culture of continuous learning;
- Provide a menu of options for technical assistance to support programs enrolled in the first level in their goal of progressing into the higher levels of the system;
- Offer technical assistance to all programs regardless of funding source and licensing status;
- Professional Development must be structured to meet the needs of family child care providers and small programs by being offered on evenings and weekends, in accessible locations, in languages other than English, and geared for adult learners from a variety of educational backgrounds/of varying learning styles;
- Assistance should be monitored by one agency to ensure access, quality and content are consistent;
- The intensity of technical assistance and professional development opportunities will vary at each level, with training and technical assistance at greater intensity at the lower levels and heightened incentives as levels increase;
- Use current systems that outline expected professional responsibilities to guide program improvement plans, including unlicensed programs.



- 3. Technical Assistance should be linked to Environmental Rating Scale reports, related to specific items indicated on Program Improvement Plans and provided in the form of mentoring, coaching and/or consulting.**
- 4. Evaluate the capacity of existing systems and plan for expansion, as needed (e.g. Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, Accreditation Facilitation Project, Licensing, and Consultants).**
 - All decision- makers should be involved at all stages of development.
- 5. Establish separate entities to monitor and provide technical assistance in the QRIS.**
 - Determine the feasibility of using Early Childhood Consultants, required by current licensing regulations, to support monitoring and technical assistance to individual programs.
 - Include an approval process for technical assistance providers (consultants, trainers, coaches and organizations).
- 6. Support for both NAEYC and NAFCC accreditation must be available and accessible for all programs in an accreditation process.**
- 7. Provide evidenced-based professional development linked to positive child outcomes.**
- 8. Include a menu of professional development to encourage non-publicly funded programs to participate in the system.**
- 9. Create a formula for financial incentives by levels.**
- 10. Financial incentives should be sufficient to reward providers adequately, and also to support them to achieve increasing levels of quality, and to promote participation.**
 - Provide adequate resources to incentivize programs to maintain standards in higher levels.
 - The intensity of financial incentives will vary at each level, with incentives at greater intensity at the higher levels.
 - Programs should reflect significant progression upward in quality to receive additional resources.
 - Support should be prioritized by need.
 - Incentive support must be offered to programs to achieve compliance.



Examples of Incentives for Programs

- Provide funding for background checks and fingerprinting, First aid and CPR, medication administration trainings, DPH Licensing application fees, physical improvement costs to achieve licensing, and purchase fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors and cribs.
- Provide funding to assist programs with accreditation and licensing fees.
- Provide financial incentives for employing and retaining degreed staff.
- Provide professional development funding for tuition, workshops, and TA consultants.
- Provide funding for program enhancements to comply with licensing standards.
- Provide incentives for public schools to make improvements to meet licensing standards.
- Provide incentives to unlicensed caregivers/ license-exempt Family Friend and Neighbor caregivers to achieve licensing.
- Provide tax incentives to programs.
- Provide loan forgiveness to programs.
- Provide tiered reimbursement within Care4Kids linked to levels.
- Provide programs incentives for environmental improvements in the form of bond funding opportunities.
- Offer loan eligibility to all programs.

Examples of Incentives for Staff:

- Provide financial incentives for degree attainment.
- Provide bonuses and increased compensation for completion of professional development and attainment of educational goals.

Examples of Incentives for Families

- Increase Care4Kids payment amounts to families who choose high quality programs.
- Ensure that families have the information they need to access the incentives and to recognize quality in programs.

QRIS Workgroup
Recommendations related to QRIS Phase In:
Development and Implementation

Rationale:

A phased in approach to the development of a QRIS affords a state the opportunity to construct and expand its system over time, testing and piloting features and design elements. This approach assists in generating buy-in from stakeholder groups while it informs the advancement of the QRIS because it incorporates lessons learned into future development of the system. A phased in approach is also an affordable method for establishing a system that can be expanded over time.

Recommendations

- 1. The QRIS will be implemented in phases to establish baseline data on Connecticut's early care settings, drive quality improvements, and promote parental choice.**
- 2. The initial phase should be a Development Phase focused on projects that will impact the overall implementation process.**

The projects will include,

- Establish workgroup to participate in the development of criteria and indicators for standards.
- Development of data systems.
- Train raters and develop assessment systems.
- Evaluate capacity of existing systems and plan for expansion, as needed: ECCP, AFP, Licensing, Consultants.
- Validate system and criteria.
- Establish the subsidy workgroup.
- Assess existing monitoring systems (state and local) to determine their ability to contribute to monitoring of QRIS.
- A Request for Proposal for an evaluator of the Pilot should precede the implementation.
- The plans for outreach and public awareness will be developed in partnership with key stakeholders.

3. For Phase One the QRIS Workgroup recommends a QRIS Pilot that:

- Includes a targeted number of participants and a diverse population of center and home-based providers, children and settings. The diversity of the group should be inclusive of urban, rural and suburban geographic areas.
- Is voluntary, by invitation according to criteria to meet the research needs.
- Provides incentives to participants upon completion of the pilot and completion of an evaluation to gather participant feedback of their experience in the Pilot.

4. For Phase Two the Workgroup recommends that the QRIS will be mandatory for all licensed centers and family child care providers for Levels One to Four.

- Participation will also be mandatory for license-exempt programs that are publicly-funded, with enrollment beginning at entry level. The system will be voluntary for all other providers during this phase.

5. Phase Three will be mandatory for all license-exempt programs and all Family Friend and Neighbor providers.

- Investigate incorporation of early childhood services such as home visiting and Birth to Three.

6. The Connecticut QRIS implementation process will be guided by a researcher in order to:

- Evaluate the validity and effectiveness of monitoring and program improvement tools;
- Capture provider needs in relation to their participation in the QRIS;
- Gauge the needs of providers for incentives to motivate advancement in the system;
- Determine if the selected increments of the QRIS levels are appropriate to effectively differentiate quality;
- Monitor if fiscal incentives are sufficient based on provider type and level to advance and sustain program quality;
- Complete an evaluation report with recommendations for revisions to the system to inform the launch of the next phase.

Resource List

Building an Early Learning System: The ABCs of Planning and Governance Structure. (2004)

http://www.finebynine.org/uploaded/file/SECPTAN_Build_PROOF.pdf

Center for the Child Care Workforce, Research & Resources, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems. http://www.ccw.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=189&Itemid=96

Child Care Aware/NACRA - We Can Do Better: 2011 Update

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CROSSWALK OF NAEYC EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM STANDARDS AND ACCREDITATION CRITERIA WITH OTHER ACCREDITING / ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS 2008

**The Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Early Childhood Education**

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Crosswalk of NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria With Other Accrediting / Assessment Systems

Prepared for the Connecticut State Department of Education: Bureau of Early Childhood Education

Introduction and Background

In 2006, the Connecticut State Board of Education (SBE) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Connecticut Community Colleges. This MOA provided funds to Connecticut Charters-a-Course (CCAC) to facilitate the completion of crosswalks between the revised accreditation system of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the other accreditation / assessment systems, listed below, currently used to measure quality in School Readiness funded programs.

1. American Montessori Society (AMS);
2. Head Start¹;
3. New England Association of Schools and Colleges: Commission on Independent Schools (NEASC Independent); and
4. New England Association of Schools and Colleges: Commission on Public Elementary Schools (NEASC Public).

The purpose of the crosswalk was to compare the other systems to the new NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria (NAEYC Standards and Criteria) in order to determine the necessity and utility of the Connecticut Preschool and Readiness Standards, or Plus Standards. Plus Standards were developed in response to C.G.S. Section 10-16p(a)(5) that established NAEYC and Head Start as appropriate measures of quality preschool programming, and allowed the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the Commissioner of Social Services to establish other quality criteria. In considering approval of other accreditation systems as a measure of quality, Plus Standards for each of the other systems were created through a review process assessing other system criteria to NAEYC criteria. When criteria in the other systems were not comparable, Plus Standards were created to bring the other system's criteria up to the NAEYC quality level. Plus Standards were approved by SBE in 1999 (NEASC Independent and AMS) and 2000 (NEASC Public). School Readiness programs could then choose among other systems, meet that system's threshold and also meet Plus Standards to fully comply with the SBE quality measure. NAEYC's newly defined standards, criteria and system features became effective for programs September 16, 2006, invalidating the Plus Standards based upon the previous NAEYC accreditation system.

This crosswalk uses the current NAEYC Standards and Criteria as its base (or stem) to compare with other systems' standards and criteria. As a criteria crosswalk, the intended purpose was to assess comparability in performance criteria, not the operational system design features such as reliability of evaluators, research base of criteria, and scoring threshold. In accordance with the MOA, this crosswalk covers the criteria specific to preschool children only.

¹ Head Start was not included in the original MOA but added to a continuation MOA.

Processes and Procedures

- Each system was informed of the study and confirmed use of the appropriate comparison documents.
- A preliminary set of comparisons for AMS, NEASC Public, and NEASC Independent was completed by CCAC staff members. Representatives from each accrediting / assessment system then had an opportunity to review the preliminary comparisons and provide input on matches to criteria.
- CCAC worked with SDE to create technical review teams for each of the accrediting / assessment systems. Members were purposefully selected for diversity of role and expertise (see Attachment A). Reviewers included current and former program administrators, evaluators for systems, SDE staff, and consultants in the field.
- Each review team member was given a binder of resource documents specific to their assigned accrediting / assessing system. These included the preliminary set of comparisons done by CCAC staff members including system representative input, as well as master copies of the other system's criteria.
- Eight half-day meetings were held during which technical review teams met to analyze comparability of criteria. Teams also conducted business via email and independent group meetings.
- Reviewers worked to find criteria from each system to match each NAEYC criterion. Reviewers utilized a 4-point rubric in their assessment (see Table 1).
- Reviewer consensus determined ratings of 1 or 2 were acceptable matches while ratings of 3 or 4 were unacceptable as matches. Other system criteria for which there was no NAEYC criteria match were tracked.
- At the concluding meeting, technical review teams presented their findings (see sample comparisons in Appendixes A – D) and discussed considerations for Plus standards (see Results).

Table 1 Criteria Comparability Rubric

<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Equivalent Match</p> <p>Clearly stated specific practice / policy is evident</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Comparable Match</p> <p>Meets the spirit of the criteria but not the wording</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Questionable Match</p> <p>Perhaps meets in part but identified practice / policy is minimal, not specific enough</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Unacceptable Match</p> <p>Insufficient direction to practice / policy</p>

Results

Table 2 shows findings of other system's criteria comparability by each NAEYC Standard. Column "a" represents the number of NAEYC criteria for which matches were found in the other system over the total applicable NAEYC criteria for each Program Standard. Column "b" converts the raw data to percentages. A threshold was set at 80% matching to define comparability of standards. The determination of comparability based on this threshold is presented in Column "c".

Key Findings

1. Head Start Performance Standards are comparable to NAEYC's Standards and Criteria.
2. AMS, NEASC Public, and NEASC Independent Standards and Criteria were not comparable to NAEYC Standards and Criteria.

Table 2 Criteria Comparability Findings by NAEYC Standard

NAEYC Standard	American Montessori Society			Head Start			NEASC Independent			NEASC Public		
	a	b	c *	a	b	c *	a	b	c *	a	b	c *
	# of Matches	% Matching	Comparable to NAEYC	# of Matches	% Matching	Comparable to NAEYC	# of Matches	% Matching	Comparable to NAEYC	# of Matches	% Matching	Comparable to NAEYC
1 - Relationships	18/32	56%	No	32/32	100%	Yes	5/32	16%	No	4/32	13%	No
2 - Curriculum	22/70	31%	No	70/70	100%	Yes	3/70	4%	No	10/70	14%	No
3 – Teaching	24/55	44%	No	51/55	93%	Yes	5/55	9%	No	23/55	42%	No
4 - Assessment of Child Progress	6/25	24%	No	24/25	96%	Yes	3/25	12%	No	8/25	32%	No
5 – Health	5/27	19%	No	24/27	89%	Yes	0/27	0%	No	0/27	0%	No
6 – Teachers	6/14	43%	No	12/14	86%	Yes	4/14	29%	No	9/14	65%	No
7 – Families	6/27	22%	No	25/27	93%	Yes	2/27	7%	No	8/27	30%	No
8 - Community Relationships	6/18	33%	No	18/18	100%	Yes	1/18	6%	No	2/18	11%	No
9 – Physical Environment	17/44	39%	No	42/44	95%	Yes	2/44	5%	No	0/44	0%	No
10 - Leadership & Management	21/51	41%	No	51/51	100%	Yes	19/51	37%	No	25/51	49%	No

* A threshold was set at 80% to define comparability of standards.

Other Findings

3. Head Start Performance Standards exceeded the 80% threshold for all 10 NAEYC Program Standards with the lowest match for Standard 6 (Teachers) at 86%.
4. With the exception of Head Start Performance Standards, no other system's criteria reached the 80% threshold on any single standard. Only two cases were reported of a system reaching even 50% or higher in a single standard.
5. NEASC Public criteria fell well below the 80% threshold for all NAEYC Program Standards. Standard 6 (Teachers) had the most criteria matches at 65%.
6. AMS criteria fell well below the 80% threshold for all NAEYC Program Standards. Standard 1 (Relationships) had the most criteria matches at 56%.
7. NEASC Independent's criteria fell well below the 80% threshold for all NAEYC Program Standards. Standard 10 (Leadership & Management) had the most criteria matches at 37%.
8. Only NAEYC identifies *required criteria* which programs must meet at all times, and publishes a threshold (meet 80% of the criteria on which they are assessed for each standard).
9. Systems had criteria for which NAEYC had no match. Some criteria for which there was no match were from systems not originally designed for early childhood settings and would not be applicable (for example, NEASC Independent has a Standard related to Residential Settings). Portions of Head Start Performance Standards relevant to its grant status had no match with NAEYC, such as Part 1305 - Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance; and all home-based, family or combination-option related standards. There were 31 AMS criteria which had no NAEYC match often due to broad wording, including 13.6P - Classroom has appropriate storage space for teacher materials; and 13.36P - Teacher uses appropriate record keeping system.

Discussion

The responsibility for quality and accountability in early childhood education is shared across many sectors, from policy makers to program staff. Accreditation of early childhood programs plays a significant role in assessing quality and addressing accountability. Multiple accreditation systems exist for early childhood programs and these systems vary greatly.

The intent of the system is one consideration. For example, Head Start's assessment system is a mandatory function of the federal grant funding, while NAEYC's is an independent and voluntary accrediting system. (Note: States, communities or other entities may mandate NAEYC Accreditation as a grant function, such that a program's decision to accept said funding determines the compliances; yet the NAEYC system itself remains independent and is ultimately categorized as voluntary to programs.) In addition, some systems are not specifically designed for early childhood settings. The purpose or intent of the system can influence the content as well as the implementation of the system.

Other considerations are the design elements – how the system is structured and operationalized. While criteria may be deemed comparable from system to system, the manner in which criteria and standards are assessed may vary greatly. For example, if a system's criteria are strong yet the system does not set a rigorous threshold for meeting the criteria, and / or evaluators are not trained to reliability, and / or the accreditation decision is subjective, the system quality can be significantly compromised. Table 3 outlines characteristics for accreditation systems considered essential by the technical review teams. As programs, state agencies, and policy makers assess accreditation systems in an effort to ensure

program quality for young children, the purpose of the accreditation system and the features outlined below must be considered. Only after such thorough consideration can we be certain that an appropriate bar for quality is being set.

Table 3 Technical Review Teams Determination of Essential Features for Accreditation Systems

Pre-Visit

- ☐ Self-study portion utilizing all involved parties: stakeholders, administration, families, Board, etc.
- ☐ Self-study portion includes program improvement plans

Qualifications

- ☐ All staff must meet a minimum qualifications level per position
- ☐ Each staff member has a professional development plan

Criteria

- ☐ Early childhood specific
- ☐ Research / evidence-based
- ☐ Written operationally and / or guidance on operationalizing criteria to acceptable evidence levels is available
- ☐ Timely revisions based on research; includes public comment period prior to final publication

Scoring and Reliability

- ☐ Evaluators trained to reliability
- ☐ On-going testing for evaluator reliability
- ☐ Ongoing evaluator training
- ☐ Objective scoring
- ☐ Scoring includes measures by stakeholders
- ☐ Scoring includes observed and rated classroom practice
- ☐ Assessment allows for a degree of program response to clarify or add to evidence
- ☐ Threshold for successful scoring decision is publicly known
- ☐ Appeals process

Post Visit

- ☐ Unannounced visits
- ☐ Annual reporting
- ☐ Complaint process
- ☐ Variance from threshold measure results in revocation of accreditation
- ☐ Accreditation term includes appropriate interim quality control checks

Currently, Connecticut's Standards for Preschool and Readiness Programs outline Plus Standards which must be met by programs receiving School Readiness funds that are accredited by AMS, NEASC Public, or NEASC Independent systems. These Plus Standards were created in an effort to set an even bar for the determination of quality across School Readiness Programs. The start of the new NAEYC accreditation system in 2006 made the current Plus Standards invalid for this purpose, as they were based upon the previous NAEYC accreditation system. This current crosswalk highlights the

great disparity between the current NAEYC accreditation and the AMS, NEASC Public, and NEASC Independent systems. This disparity, as well as the questions related to comparability of the systems (purpose and assessment of compliance), make the creation of new Plus Standards inadvisable at this juncture.

More work is needed to assess the comparability of system design features and to answer fundamental questions which will inform policy decisions related to accreditation / assessment systems. The criteria, the system intent, and the system design elements must *all* support quality and accountability.

Policy Recommendations to the Commissioner of Education for the State Board of Education

1. Uphold C.G.S. Section 10-16 p(a)(5) which establishes NAEYC and Head Start as appropriate measures of quality preschool programming, at this time.
 - a. Establish a process to assess other accreditation / assessment systems to ensure comparability, beginning at the standards and criteria level, and including system design features.
2. Revise School Readiness policy, eliminating alternate accreditation / assessment systems and Plus Standards as measures of quality.
3. Create a timetable for School Readiness funded programs currently operating under other accreditation / assessment systems to achieve NAEYC accreditation or Head Start.

Summary

Technical review teams compared criteria from accreditation systems currently used to measure quality in School Readiness funded programs to NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria (NAEYC Standards and Criteria). The following system criteria were considered: American Montessori Society; Head Start; New England Association of Schools and Colleges: Commission on Independent Schools; and New England Association of Schools and Colleges: Commission on Public Elementary Schools. This crosswalk showed that Head Start Performance Standards are comparable to NAEYC's Standards and Criteria; however, AMS, NEASC Public and NEASC Independent do not show comparability to NAEYC Standards and Criteria at the criteria level. More information is necessary to assess other factors that impact the systems. Significant questions remain regarding system features related to the intended purpose and design of the system and the assessment of criteria employed by the various systems. More work is needed to assess the comparability of system design features and to answer fundamental questions which will inform policy decisions related to accreditation / assessment systems.

Attachment A
Technical Review Team Members

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Attachment B Source List

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Appendix A: NAEYC / AMS Criteria Comparison Example

NAEYC Number	NAEYC Accreditation Criterion	AMS #	AMS Accreditation Criterion
Standard 2	The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.		
2.A.	<i>Curriculum: Essential Characteristics</i>		
2.A.01	The program has a written statement of philosophy and uses one or more written curricula or curriculum frameworks consistent with its philosophy that address central aspects of child development.	9.1	9.1 The school mission statement, educational goals and philosophy are defined in print.
2.A.02	A clearly stated curriculum or curriculum framework provides a coherent focus for planning children's experiences. It allows for adaptations and modifications to ensure access to the curriculum for all children.	9.2	9.2 The school mission statement, educational goals and philosophy are appropriate to the needs of the school population and in harmony with Montessori's descriptions of the nature of the child, the needs of the family, the prepared environment, and the needs of the staff
2.A.03	The curriculum guides teachers' development and intentional implementation of learning opportunities consistent with the program's goals and objectives.	9.2	9.2 The school mission statement, educational goals and philosophy are appropriate to the needs of the school population and in harmony with Montessori's descriptions of the nature of the child, the needs of the family, the prepared environment, and the needs of the staff
2.A.04	The curriculum can be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language		
2.A.05	Curriculum goals and objectives guide teachers' ongoing assessment of children's progress.		
2.A.06	The curriculum guides teachers to integrate assessment information with curriculum goals to support individualized learning.	10.13	10.13 The school requires each directing teacher to provide a description of the systems used for child observation, record-keeping and planning for individuals and groups.
2.A.07	The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of the children. The schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> provides time and support for transitions. <input type="checkbox"/> includes both indoor and outdoor experiences. <input type="checkbox"/> is responsive to a child's need to rest or be active. 	10.12	10.12 The school requires each directing teacher to provide a schedule of a typical day by major time blocks.
2.A.08	Materials and equipment used to implement the curriculum reflect the lives of the children and families as well as the diversity found in society, including gender, age, language, and abilities. Materials and equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> provide for children's safety while being appropriately challenging. <input type="checkbox"/> encourage exploration, experimentation, and discovery. <input type="checkbox"/> promote action and interaction. <input type="checkbox"/> are organized to support independent use. <input type="checkbox"/> are rotated to reflect changing curriculum and accommodate new interests and skill levels. <input type="checkbox"/> are rich in variety. <input type="checkbox"/> accommodate children's special needs. 	12.6	12.6 Curriculum support materials are available in each classroom environment

Appendix B: NAEYC / Head Start Criteria Comparison Example

NAEYC Number	NAEYC Accreditation Criterion	Head Start PS Number
Standard 2	The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.	1304.5; 1304.21 (c) (1)
2.A.	Curriculum: Essential Characteristics	
2.A.01	The program has a written statement of philosophy and uses one or more written curricula or curriculum frameworks consistent with its philosophy that address central aspects of child development.	1304.5 (a) (5)
2.A.02	A clearly stated curriculum or curriculum framework provides a coherent focus for planning children's experiences. It allows for adaptations and modifications to ensure access to the curriculum for all children.	45 CFR 1304.21 (a) (1) (i); 45 CFR 1304.21 (c) (1) (i)
2.A.03	The curriculum guides teachers' development and intentional implementation of learning opportunities consistent with the program's goals and objectives.	1304.21 (c) (1)
2.A.04	The curriculum can be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language.	45 CFR 1304.21 (a) (1) (i); 45 CFR 1304.21 (a) (1) (iii)
2.A.05	Curriculum goals and objectives guide teachers' ongoing assessment of children's progress.	1304.21 (c) (2)
2.A.06	The curriculum guides teachers to integrate assessment information with curriculum goals to support individualized learning.	45 CFR 1304.21 (c) (1) (i)
2.A.07	The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of the children. The schedule provides time and support for transitions. includes both indoor and outdoor experiences. is responsive to a child's need to rest or be active.	45 CFR 1304.21 (a) (3) (ii); 45 CFR 1304.21 (c) (1) (vii); 45 CFR 1304.23 (c) (3)
2.A.08	Materials and equipment used to implement the curriculum reflect the lives of the children and families as well as the diversity found in society, including gender, age, language, and abilities. Materials and equipment provide for children's safety while being appropriately challenging. encourage exploration, experimentation, and discovery. promote action and interaction. are organized to support independent use. are rotated to reflect changing curriculum and accommodate new interests and skill levels. are rich in variety. accommodate children's special needs.	45 CFR 1304.21 (a) (4) (i); 45 CFR 1304.53 (b) (1) (ii and v)

(Note: To reduce excess space, only the Head Start Performance Standards reference number is included.)

Appendix C: NAEYC / NEASC Independent Criteria Comparison Example

NAEYC Number	NAEYC Accreditation Criterion	NEASC Indep. Number	NEASC Independent Accreditation Criterion
Standard 2	The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.	Stand 4	Standard 4 (Program): The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that stems from the school's beliefs about teaching and learning, is appropriate to support its mission, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted. 7.c. The school has curricular and extra-curricular programs in place which specifically and effectively address intellectual and developmental needs of children in the Early Childhood Program and are consistent with the school's stated mission.
2.A.	<i>Curriculum: Essential Characteristics</i>		
2.A.01	The program has a written statement of philosophy and uses one or more written curricula or curriculum frameworks consistent with its philosophy that address central aspects of child development.	1, 4	Schools are required to have a written curriculum that is consistent the mission and beliefs about teaching and learning. Standard 1 (Mission): There is congruence between the school's stated mission and core values and its actual program, policies, planning, and decision-making at both the operational and governance levels. Standard 4 (Program): The school provides a comprehensive program of intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities that stems from the school's beliefs about teaching and learning, is appropriate to support its mission and core values, and is consistent with the needs of the range of students admitted.
2.A.02	A clearly stated curriculum or curriculum framework provides a coherent focus for planning children's experiences. It allows for adaptations and modifications to ensure access to the curriculum for all children.	4.b.	4.b. The school programs demonstrate consideration for the appropriate intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, emotional and ethical development of students in all aspects of school and student life.
2.A.03	The curriculum guides teachers' development and intentional implementation of learning opportunities consistent with the program's goals and objectives.	4.a., 4.g.	4.a. Professional development time is used for faculty to discuss issues of teaching and learning. 4.g. The school recognizes developmental levels of children and takes them into consideration in planning programs and teaching methodologies.
2.A.04	The curriculum can be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language.	5, 5.a., 5.c., 5.e.	Standard 5 (Experience of the Students): The school actively considers individual students and has developed plans, policies, programs, and pedagogy to nurture, support, and encourage all students to reach their potential and to participate in the life of the school. 5.a. The school recognizes differences within the student body such as gender, learning style or ability, race, age, ethnicity, family background, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and religious practice, and actively responds to students' and adults' positive or negative experiences. 5.c. Time is made available on a regular basis for teachers to learn ways in which their cultural backgrounds help or hinder their ability to plan together to work with students, parents, and other adults in the community. 5.e. There is a process in place to see how the school's programs need to change to reflect the diversity of cultural experiences and to identify adults and/or students who will need additional support to function effectively in a pluralistic environment.
2.A.05	Curriculum goals and objectives guide teachers' ongoing assessment of children's progress.	5.d.	5.d. There is a procedure in place to assess and report on how individual students are meeting the goals of the program with regard to both personal and academic growth.
2.A.06	The curriculum guides teachers to integrate assessment information with curriculum goals to support individualized learning.	5.g.	5.g. There is a process in place to identify students who might benefit from a modification of the program.
2.A.07	The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of the		

	children. The schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides time and support for transitions. • includes both indoor and outdoor experiences. • is responsive to a child's need to rest or be active. 		
2.A.08	Materials and equipment used to implement the curriculum reflect the lives of the children and families as well as the diversity found in society, including gender, age, language, and abilities. Materials and equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide for children's safety while being appropriately challenging. • encourage exploration, experimentation, and discovery. • promote action and interaction. • are organized to support independent use. • are rotated to reflect changing curriculum and accommodate new interests and skill levels. • are rich in variety. • accommodate children's special needs. 	6.c.	6.c. There are instructional materials and equipment in sufficient quality, quantity, and variety to give effective support to the aims and methods of the program.

Appendix D: NAEYC / NEASC Public Criteria Comparison Example

NAEYC Number	NAEYC Accreditation Criterion	NEASC Public Number	NEASC Public Accreditation Criterion
Standard 2	The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.		
2.A.	<i>Curriculum: Essential Characteristics</i>		
2.A.01	The program has a written statement of philosophy and uses one or more written curricula or curriculum frameworks consistent with its philosophy that address central aspects of child development.	1.2; 2.1	1.2. The school has a set of measurable academic and social expectations that are used to evaluate the success of the mission statement; 2.1. The school's written curriculum is aligned with the school's stated expectations for students' academic and social and developmental needs.
2.A.02	A clearly stated curriculum or curriculum framework provides a coherent focus for planning children's experiences. It allows for adaptations and modifications to ensure access to the curriculum for all children.	1.2; 2.2; 2.4; 3.1	1.2. The school has a set of measurable academic and social expectations that are used to evaluate the success of the mission statement; 2.2. Each curriculum learning area clearly articulates learning standards which support the school's stated expectations; 2.4. Effective curriculum coordination and articulation takes place within the school as well as with all receiving and sending district schools; 3.1. Classroom instruction embodies the school's beliefs about teaching and learning, reflects current research on effective teaching strategies and is designed to enable all students to meet the school's expectations for academic achievement.
2.A.03	The curriculum guides teachers' development and intentional implementation of learning opportunities consistent with the program's goals and objectives.	2.1; 2.2; 2.4; 3.1	2.1. The school's written curriculum is aligned with the school's stated expectations for students' academic and social and developmental needs; 2.2. Each curriculum learning area clearly articulates learning standards which support the school's stated expectations; 2.4. Effective curriculum coordination and articulation takes place within the school as well as with all receiving and sending district schools; 3.1. Classroom instruction embodies the school's beliefs about teaching and learning, reflects current research on effective teaching strategies and is designed to enable all students to meet the school's expectations for academic achievement.
2.A.04	The curriculum can be implemented in a manner that reflects responsiveness to family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language.	3.2	3.2. Instruction addresses the individual needs of students, enables all students to have successful experiences and promotes independent life-long learning.
2.A.05	Curriculum goals and objectives guide teachers' ongoing assessment of children's progress.		
2.A.06	The curriculum guides teachers to integrate assessment information with curriculum goals to support individualized learning.	3.2; 4.4	3.2. Instruction addresses the individual needs of students, enables all students to have successful experiences and promotes independent life-long learning; 4.4. The identified learning standards for each curricular learning area are the basis for assessing each student's progress
2.A.07	The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of the children. The schedule		
	provides time and support for transitions.		
	includes both indoor and outdoor experiences.		
	is responsive to a child's need to rest or be active.		

2.A.08	Materials and equipment used to implement the curriculum reflect the lives of the children and families as well as the diversity found in society, including gender, age, language, and abilities.	3.3	3.3. Appropriate instructional materials and services are available for all programs including those for students identified with special needs and students whose abilities present unique needs.
	Materials and equipment		
	provide for children's safety while being appropriately challenging.		
	encourage exploration, experimentation, and discovery.		
	promote action and interaction.		
	are organized to support independent use.		
	are rotated to reflect changing curriculum and accommodate new interests and skill levels.		
	are rich in variety.		
	accommodate children's special needs.		

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Family Engagement & Support**Criterion:** Reciprocal Communication

Rationale: As their first teachers and most effective advocates, families are the strongest influence on their children's development and learning. Programs and providers that establish partnerships with families through knowledge of and responsiveness to their diverse strengths and needs are the most effective in supporting children's development and learning. Effective programs and providers engage in mutual, two-way respectful communication with families that reflects their cultural and linguistic preferences and recognizes the roles of families and of programs and providers in supporting individual children's development and learning.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>Program provides opportunities for families to share information about their children's specific interests, needs, and development and about their own interests, talents, preferences, and goals for their children.#</p> <p>Program regularly shares information with families about their children's experiences, development, and learning in the program.#</p>	<p>Program staff meet with families as requested to share information on their children's experiences, development, and learning in the program, particularly when the child has special needs or the parent or staff has special concern related to any domain of development.</p> <p>Provides opportunities at mutually convenient times at least twice a year for families and staff to share information on their children's experiences, development, and learning in the program.</p> <p>Program shares written information with families on child's developmental progress# at least twice a year.</p> <p>Program uses a variety of resources* to provide written materials in languages and communication styles/preferences meaningful to the families enrolled.</p>	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
			Provides opportunities at mutually convenient times at least twice a year for families and staff to share information on their children's experiences, development, and learning in the program.	
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>Provider provides opportunities for families to share information about their children's specific interests, needs, and development and about their own interests, talents, preferences, and goals for their children.#</p> <p>Provider regularly shares information with families about their children's experiences, development, and learning in the care setting.#</p>	<p>Provider meets with families as requested to share information on their children's experiences, development, and learning in the program, particularly when the child has special needs or the parent or staff have special concern related to any domain of development.</p> <p>Provides opportunities at mutually convenient times at least twice a year for families to share information on their children's experiences, development, and learning in the program.</p> <p>Provider shares written information with families on child's developmental progress# at least once a year.</p>	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Family Engagement & Support**Criterion:** Connecting families with community resources and services

Rationale: Early learning and development programs and providers are a critical resource for families that can have a strong and lasting impact on children's development and learning. Programs and providers have relationships with families that provide opportunities to share information with and link families to community resources. To do this effectively, programs and providers must be knowledgeable of and have connections to community resources and services that are responsive to the needs and circumstances of all children and families, especially high-need children and families.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Staff have knowledge of community resources, agencies, and services and of state and federal benefits, and shares this information with families.	The program participates in a community or state organization, group, or network* that facilitates access of families to services and programs as needed.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Provider has knowledge of community resources, agencies, and services and of state and federal benefits, and shares this information with families.	The program participates in a community or state organization, group, or network* that facilitates access of families to services and programs as needed.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Family Engagement & Support

Criterion: Family involvement and leadership

Rationale: Families' active involvement is critical in supporting their children's development and learning and in enhancing and extending the impact of early care and education programs and providers. Programs and providers that are effective in strengthening family involvement create a welcoming and inviting environment that offers opportunities for all families to become involved in a variety of ways that are responsive to and respectful of the diversity of family backgrounds, interests, skills, talents, preferences, and availability.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Programs offer opportunities for parents to participate in their child's classroom and program activities. Programs share information with families on how to reinforce at home specific skills identified in the Early Learning and Development Standards.#	Programs use a nationally recognized tool to self-assess their policies and practices regarding family involvement and engagement, particularly for families from diverse backgrounds, and uses the results to set goals and actions in the program's improvement plan.# Programs offer family involvement activities, events, or experiences# at least twice a year, tailored to the specific needs and interests of the families served.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Provider offers opportunities for parents to participate in the activities in the care setting. Provider shares information with families on how to reinforce at home specific skills identified in the Early Learning and Development Standards.	Provider offers a family involvement activity, event, or experience# at least once a year.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Health & Safety

Criterion: Safety of the Physical Environment

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Prevention of injury in a safe environment ensures that all children will be healthy and able to benefit from learning experiences. Maintaining a safe environment includes appropriate supervision of children and capacity to identify and respond to possible risk conditions and emergency situations. Particular attention to injury prevention may be needed for children with disabilities or special health care needs as well as for other children who may be especially susceptible to injury, including infants and toddlers.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	All staff complete approved training* on CT DPH statutes and regulations and are able to identify potential hazards (indoor and outdoor) and proactively report hazards to be rectified. All staff know and follow safety regulations and emergency plans, including those specific for children with disabilities.	The program uses a nationally recognized health and safety checklist# developed for use in early childhood programs (indoor and outdoor). The program's improvement plan# incorporates goals and actions based on results of checklist review and in conjunction with the program's approved health consultant, to improve health and safety policies and practices. The program has a written plan# for a range of emergency situations.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes.		The provider completes approved training* on CT DPH statutes and regulations and uses the DPH Inspection Form to self-monitor for on-going compliance with regulations. Provider and any assistants know and follow safety regulations and emergency plans, including those specific for children with	The provider uses a nationally recognized health and safety checklist# developed for use in family day care homes. The provider's improvement plan# incorporates goals and actions based on results of checklist review to improve health and safety practices. The provider has a written plan# for a range of emergency situations.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
		disabilities. Provider conducts monthly evacuation drills and keeps a log# of the dates and times when evacuation was practiced.		

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Health & Safety

Criterion: Health Practices

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Using procedures that prevent transmission of disease and promote physical and social-emotional health ensures that children will be healthy and able to attend and benefit from learning experiences. Particular attention to disease prevention and health promotion may be required for children with disabilities or special health care needs as well as for other children who may be especially vulnerable, including infants and toddlers.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>Risk assessment screening for communicable diseases# is conducted for all staff annually.</p> <p>All staff complete approved training* in Standard Precautions.</p> <p>To ensure that all children are able to fully participate, including those with disabilities and special health care needs, there is one staff member certified* to administer medications available on the premises at all times.</p> <p>The program's approved health consultant* provides written recommendations for improvement, based on observation and records review, with special attention to the care of infants and toddlers and children with disabilities and special health care needs.</p>	The program documents compliance with and implements corrections according to the recommendations of the consultant (or consultants). The program's approved health care consultant monitors compliance with recommendations.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
		Each classroom has a first aid kit with contents specified by DPH.*		
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>Risk assessment screening for communicable diseases# is conducted for provider and all assistants annually.</p> <p>Provider (and all assistants) complete approved training* in Standard Precautions.</p> <p>Provider has first aid kit located in child care area, with contents specified by DPH.*</p>	Provider participates in a regional TA network* that offers access to information and advice from consultants, including health care consultants.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS**Notes:** * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit**Standard:** Health & Safety**Criterion:** Nutrition and Physical Activity

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Nutritious food and opportunities for physical exercise in the early childhood setting, and provision of information on nutrition and physical activity to families, promote child health and development so that children will be able to benefit from learning experiences. Understanding the food preferences of individual children and families from different backgrounds enables programs and providers to provide nutritious meals during care while reinforcing healthy practices in families. Particular attention to provisions for physical exercise may be required for children with disabilities or special health care needs as well as for infants and toddlers.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>Program provides staff and families with written information# on established guidelines on nutritious meals and/or snacks and on physical activity.</p> <p>When provided by the program, program staff follow instructions for offering appropriate meals for children with special dietary needs.</p> <p>Program provides a comfortable place for breastfeeding and coordinates feedings with the infant's mother.</p> <p>Full-day (8 or more hours) programs offer toddlers and preschoolers at least 60 minutes of indoor and outdoor physical activity daily; part-day programs offer toddlers and preschoolers at least an equivalent pro-rated number of minutes of indoor and outdoor physical activity daily.</p>	<p>All program staff complete approved training* on health, nutrition, and physical activity for the prevention against obesity and other health issues i.e. diabetes etc.</p> <p>Families are offered opportunities to participate in training on health, nutrition, and physical activity.</p> <p>When food is provided by the program, program requests information from families on cultural and individual preferences and ensures that food served to children reflects the cultural diversity of enrolled families.</p>	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care	Level 1 requires compliance	Families and any assistants are provided with	Completes approved trainings* on	Programs at this level

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
homes.	with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>written information# on established guidelines on nutritious meals and/or snacks and on physical activity.</p> <p>When food is provided by the provider, provider follows instructions for appropriate meals for children with special dietary needs.</p> <p>Provides a comfortable place for breastfeeding and coordinates feedings with the infant's mother.</p> <p>Toddlers and preschoolers who are in the care setting 8 or more hours are offered at least 60 minutes of indoor and outdoor physical activity daily; toddlers and preschoolers in the care setting for fewer hours are offered at least an equivalent pro-rated number of minutes of indoor and outdoor physical activity daily.</p>	<p>health and nutrition (which encompasses nutritious meals and physical activities for prevention against obesity and other health issues i.e. diabetes etc.).</p> <p>When food is provided by the provider, provider requests information from families on cultural and individual preferences and ensures that food served to children reflects the cultural diversity of enrolled families.</p>	hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Leadership & Management

Criterion: Financial & legal management

Indicator Description: Sound financial management

Rationale: Consistency of high quality care has been demonstrated to be related to children's development and learning. Program administrators and family child care providers are responsible for ensuring that children experience consistently high quality early education experiences. This includes managing finances so that the setting is financially stable and has the resources to provide high quality care.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Program has a budget with itemized income and expenditures.#	Program reconciles its budget by comparing income and expenditures quarterly. Program conducts legal and financial risk assessment# annually.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Provider has a budget with itemized income and expenditures.#	Provider reconciles its budget by comparing income and expenditures quarterly. Provider conducts legal and financial risk assessment# annually.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Leadership & Management

Criterion: Recordkeeping

Indicator Description: Recordkeeping system

Rationale: Consistency of high quality care has been demonstrated to be related to children's development and learning. Program administrators and family child care providers are responsible for ensuring that children experience consistently high quality early education experiences. Accurate, up-to-date, and complete records support compliance with licensing requirements and therefore continued operation, as well as access to information on children and families needed for curriculum planning, child observation and assessment, and response to family interests and needs.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Program implements a system# for ensuring confidentiality, maintenance, and updating of all required records.	Program implements an annual review# of all required records.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Provider implements a system# for ensuring confidentiality, maintenance, and updating of all required records.	Provider implements an annual review# of all required records.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

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SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS**Notes:** * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit**Standard:** Leadership & Management**Criterion:** Staffing & staff management**Indicator Description:** Staff Performance Reviews

Rationale: Research indicates that children in early care and education settings with adults who have demonstrated knowledge and skills in child development and early education have better learning experiences and outcomes. Consistency of high quality care also has been demonstrated to be related to children's development and learning. Providing all adults working with children with information about their responsibilities and expectations, and with feedback on their performance regarding those responsibilities and expectations, is one strategy for ensuring high quality, consistent experiences. These responsibilities and expectations include those related to responding appropriately to the specific needs and circumstances of all enrolled children, including infants and toddlers, children with special needs or disabilities, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children of color, children from immigrant families, children in foster care, and children from low-income families.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Program conducts annual performance reviews# for all staff based on job descriptions# and information provided during orientation and in updates on program expectations for staff. Performance reviews are used to develop professional development plans.# Program ensures that all staff are enrolled in the CT Early Childhood Professional Registry.	Annual performance reviews of job-related performance goals are conducted for all staff and include staff self-assessment.#	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care	Level 1 requires compliance	Provider has written job	Provider conducts an annual self-	Programs at this level hold NAFFC

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
homes	with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	description# for assistant(s), if any. Provider ensures that provider and all assistants are in the CT Early Childhood Professional Registry.	assessment# and uses the results to set goals and actions in the provider's improvement plan.# Provider conducts an annual performance review of assistants, if relevant, based on the job description. Performance reviews are used to develop professional development plans#	Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Leadership & Management

Criterion: Staffing & staff management

Indicator Description: Access to resource staff and consultants to meet the needs of children and families

Rationale: Children in early care and education settings may have conditions or experiences that affect their development and learning, but are beyond the knowledge and skills of staff and providers to address. In order to provide the most effective learning environment, programs and providers need access to specialized knowledge and skills from other professionals, particularly in appropriately responding to the needs and circumstances of high-risk children. Also, early care and education programs and providers have information and insights regarding the children in their care that can inform and guide the work of other professionals with those children, increasing opportunities to support and promote their development and learning.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Program provides opportunities for staff to participate in and/or provide input to child-related meetings with resource staff or consultants, as requested by the child's family.	Program ensures that there are annual observations and consultations with one or more approved consultants* related to the program's improvement plan.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.		Provider participates in a regional TA network* that offers access to information and advice from consultants. Provider participates in and/or provides input to child-related meetings with resource staff or consultants, as requested by the child's family.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Leadership & Management

Criterion: Self-assessment and improvement

Indicator Description: System for self-assessment and improvement

Rationale: Consistency of high quality care has been demonstrated to be related to children's development and learning. Early care and education programs and providers that routinely assess key elements of quality using standardized instruments, use multiple sources of input and information, and develop and implement action plans for quality improvement are likely to provide higher quality and more consistent experiences for the children they serve. In order to support the development and learning of all children, self-assessments should include attention to how well the program or provider is responding to the needs and circumstances of all children, including infants and toddlers, children with special needs or disabilities, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children of color, children from immigrant families, children in foster care, and children from low-income families.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Program conducts an annual self-assessment using an approved instrument or process*# that comprehensively examines operations, policies, handbooks or manuals, procedures, and practices and uses the results to set goals and actions in the program's improvement plan.#	Program's annual self-assessment includes input from staff, families, and other stakeholders.# Program regularly monitors progress on its improvement plan and adjusts actions steps as necessary.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.		Provider conducts an annual self-assessment using an approved instrument or process*# that comprehensively examines all aspects of operations, policies, handbooks or manuals, procedures, and practices and uses the results to set goals and actions in the provider's improvement plan.#	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Learning Environment**Criterion:** Environmental Supports for Development & Learning**Indicator Description:** Arrangement of Learning Space

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Spaces with materials designed to promote learning and development goals, including those for children with disabilities, provide children with opportunities for self-directed exploration. Children from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to use learning spaces when these areas provide materials and support experiences that are familiar to them. Assessment of the learning environment using a standardized observational measure of environmental quality gives programs and providers a comprehensive and rigorous approach to identifying specific areas and strategies for improvement.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Program conducts a self-assessment using an approved observational tool# to assess its learning environment and uses the results to set goals and actions in the program's improvement plan.#	Program is assessed by an external observer* using an approved observational tool# to assess its learning environment and uses the results to set goals and actions in the program's improvement plan.#	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child Care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Provider conducts a self-assessment using an observational tool# to assess the learning environment and uses the results to set goals and actions in the provider's improvement plan.#	Provider is assessed by an external observer* using an observational tool# to assess the learning environment and uses the results to set goals and actions in the provider's improvement plan.#	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Learning Environment**Criterion:** Caregiver- teacher/child interactions and relationships

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Research indicates that children's social-emotional development is promoted by nurturing relationships with caring adults, that social-emotional development is correlated with learning, and that intentional practices are needed to support development across all domains and to facilitate learning. Programs and providers that develop individual relationships with children by being responsive, attentive, consistent, comforting, supportive, and culturally sensitive, and use intentional strategies to communicate effectively and build relationships with each child, based on knowledge of individual child interests and needs, support social-emotional and language development as well as reinforce engagement in learning experiences. Assessment of adult-child interactions and relationships using a standardized observational measure of environmental quality gives programs and providers a comprehensive and rigorous approach to identifying specific areas and strategies for improvement.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Program conducts a self-assessment using an approved observational tool# to assess teacher-child interactions and uses the results to set goals and actions in the program's improvement plan.# Policies for staff assignments and children's schedules maximize the consistency and continuity of teacher-child relationships and peer group composition.	Program is assessed by an external observer* using an approved observational tool# to assess teacher-child interactions and relationships and uses the results to set goals and actions in the program's improvement plan.#	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Provider conducts a self-assessment using an approved observational tool# to assess teacher-child interactions and relationships and uses the	Provider is assessed by an external observer* using an approved observational tool# to assess teacher-child interactions and relationships	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
		results to set goals and actions in the provider's improvement plan.#	and uses the results to set goals and actions in the provider's improvement plan.#	

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS**Notes:** * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit**Standard:** Learning Environment**Criterion:** Learning goals and experiences**Indicator Description:** Planning Intentional Learning for Children

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Research indicates that learning outcomes are facilitated when experiences are planned and intentionally aligned with learning goals. The following elements are critical in planning intentional learning: high expectations for all children, a learning-oriented environment, engaging activities, and thoughtful questioning and feedback. Learning experiences should be intentionally planned to address the knowledge and skills defined in state early learning and development standards and should be responsive to the needs of specific groups of children and individuals, including infants and toddlers, children with special needs or disabilities, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children of color, children from immigrant families, children in foster care, and children from low-income families. The implementation of specific tools and resources should be done in an intentional, responsive, and reflective manner.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Classroom staff complete approved training* on the Early Learning and Development Standards# and selected curriculum, materials and tools.# The Early Learning and Development Standards# are used in planning classroom experiences. Planned experiences reflect the diversity of the children and families served.#	Classroom staff complete approved training* on differentiating learning experiences to meet individual child learning goals. Program implements learning experiences (curriculum) aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards. Plans describe the learning experiences and goals, specify adults' role in supporting learning, reflect the needs and interests of individual children, and indicate how families will be involved.	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care	Level 1 requires compliance with	Provider completes approved	Provider implements a written	Programs at this level hold NAFCC

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
homes.	Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>training* on the Early Learning and Development Standards# and selected curriculum, materials and tools.#</p> <p>The Early Learning and Development Standards are used in planning learning experiences.</p> <p>Planned experiences reflect the diversity of the children and families served.#</p>	<p>plan of experiences (curriculum)# aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Provider completes approved training* on differentiating experiences to meet individual child learning goals.</p>	Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS**Notes:** * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit**Standard:** Learning Environment**Criterion:** Child observation & assessment**Indicator Description:** 1-Conducting Observation and Assessment

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Information on children's progress assists programs and providers as they structure their environments and experiences to support individual development and learning. Working with families and other organizations serving enrolled children ensures that programs and providers better understand children's needs and can reinforce and supplement experiences in other settings to maximize development and learning. Observation and assessment methods should allow programs and providers to understand individual developmental progress and needs for all children, including infants and toddlers, children with special needs or disabilities, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children of color, children from immigrant families, children in foster care, and children from low-income families.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>Program conducts and documents observations# related to the Early Learning and Development Standards of all children on a regular basis.</p> <p>Observations are conducted during typical classroom experiences.</p> <p>Program collects family observations/ reports# on individual children's interests, preferences, and developmental progress.</p> <p>If any concerns about a child's development are identified, the program refers families to the Help Me Grow system or conducts a basic developmental screening using an approved tool.#</p>	<p>Program conducts and documents periodic assessment of all children's progress in development and learning, using an approved formative assessment tool.#</p> <p>With parental permission, program gathers information on child's development from other programs serving the child.</p>	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/ National Standards
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>Provider conducts and documents observations# related to the Early Learning and Development Standards of all children on a regular basis.</p> <p>Observations are conducted during typical experiences.</p> <p>Provider collects family observations/ reports# on individual children's interests, preferences, and developmental progress.</p> <p>If any concerns about a child's development are identified, the provider refers families to the Help Me Grow system.</p>	<p>Provider documents periodic assessment of all children's progress in development and learning, using an approved formative assessment tool.#</p> <p>With parental permission, provider gathers information on child's development from other providers serving the child.</p>	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Learning Environment

Criterion: Child observation & assessment

Indicator Description: 2-Using Observation and Assessment Information

Rationale/Link with Child Outcomes: Information on children's progress in the care setting assists programs and providers as they structure their environments and experiences to support and foster individual development and learning. Observation and assessment methods should allow programs and providers to understand individual children's developmental progress and needs for all children, including infants and toddlers, children with special needs or disabilities, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children of color, children from immigrant families, children in foster care, and children from low-income families. Working with families and other organizations serving enrolled children ensures that programs and providers better understand children's needs and can reinforce and supplement experiences in other settings to maximize development and learning.

Setting/ Program	Licensing Requirements	Good Practice	Better Practice	Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Information from observations is used in classroom-wide planning for learning experiences.# NOTE: Indicators in the Family Engagement and Support Standard refer to program sharing of individual child observation and assessment information with families.	Information from observation and assessment, along with other information from related service providers when appropriate, is used to individualize curriculum, teaching strategies, and classroom support.#	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	Information from observations is used in planning for learning experiences.# NOTE: Indicators in the Family Engagement and Support Standard refer to provider sharing of individual child observation and assessment information with families.	Information from observations and assessments is used to plan learning experiences for individual children.#	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS**Notes:** * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit**Standard:** Workforce Qualifications & Professional Development**Criterion:** Education & Credentials – Teaching Staff**Indicator Description:** Education and Credential Requirements for Teaching Staff

Rationale: Research indicates that children in early care and education settings with adults who have demonstrated knowledge and skills through formal education and credentials in child development and early education have better learning experiences and outcomes. The greater the level of knowledge and skills, the more positive the children's experiences and outcomes. These knowledge and skills include understanding child development and strategies to promote development and learning for all children, including infants and toddlers, children with special needs or disabilities, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children of color, children from immigrant families, children in foster care, and children from low-income families.

See chart on following page for indicators.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>There is at least one person in each group who is Head Teacher qualified based on state regulations, including a CDA or twelve credits in ECE from a program that articulates credits to a degree program. Credits to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Early Care & Education • Child Growth & Development <p>with the balance of the credits for courses on state-recommended topics.*</p> <p>All teaching staff in the program are entered in the CT Workforce Registry.</p>	Program meets NAEYC Candidacy Staff Qualifications requirements which are verified by the Candidacy Calculator in the Workforce Registry.*	<p>Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.</p> <p>Programs with state or federal funding are required to meet the educational qualifications specified in the relevant regulations and/or policies.</p>
Family child care homes	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>The provider has a High School Diploma or GED.</p> <p>Qualifications include 10 hours of approved administrative training,* including training on emergency preparedness.</p> <p>The provider is entered in the CT Workforce Registry.</p>	<p>The provider has a minimum of CDA or twelve credits in ECE from a program that articulates credits to a degree program. Credits to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Early Care & Education • Child Growth & Development <p>Qualifications include 10 hours of approved administrative training,* including training on business practices.</p>	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS

Notes: * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit

Standard: Workforce Qualifications & Professional Development**Criterion:** Professional development**Indicator Description:** Continuing Education and Training

Rationale: Research indicates that children in early care and education settings with adults who have demonstrated knowledge and skills in child development and early education have better learning experiences and outcomes. Ongoing professional development opportunities for program staff and providers ensure that their knowledge and skills are reinforced and up-to-date, particularly those related to supporting the development and learning of high-risk children. Using approved trainers and aligning training content with identified improvement goals maximizes the benefits of professional development.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	For each member of the staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 10 hours per year of competency-based training aligned with CKCs* • Minimum of 35% or more of all annual hours by state approved trainers* • Annual training topics to include supporting young children including infants and toddlers and children and families who are culturally, linguistically and ability diverse. • Membership in a national or state early childhood professional organization 	For each member of the staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 15 hours per year of competency-based training aligned with CKCs* • Minimum of 50% or more of all annual hours by state approved trainers* • Aligned to program professional development plan and performance review process# 	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 10 hours per year of competency-based training aligned with CKCs* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 15 hours per year of competency-based training aligned with CKCs* 	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by

Workforce Qualifications and Professional Development –Indicators 10.13

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
	Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 35% or more of all annual hours by state approved trainers* • Annual training topics to include supporting young children and families who are culturally, linguistically and ability diverse. • Membership in national or state early childhood professional organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 50% or more of all annual hours by state approved trainers* • Aligned to individual professional development plan# 	national organizations.

SUBGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDICATORS**Notes:** * = system infrastructure; # = template and/or example in toolkit**Standard:** Workforce Qualifications & Professional Development **Criterion:** Education & Credentials – Program Administrators**Indicator Description:** Education and Credential Requirements for Program Administrators

Rationale: Consistency of high quality care has been demonstrated to be related to children’s development and learning. Program administrators and family child care providers are responsible for ensuring that children in their care have consistently high quality experiences. This requires knowledge and skills related to child development and to management of a business organization and identity as an early care and education professional.

Setting/ Program	Level 1 Licensing Requirements	Level 2 Good Practice	Level 3 Better Practice	Level 4 Best Practice/National Standards
Centers and schools.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	<p>The Program Administrator shall have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six credits in Administrative and Leadership^ and • six credits in early childhood education and • completed training on emergency preparedness.* <p>(^credits must meet Connecticut Director Credential competencies.)</p> <p>The Program Administrator is familiar with IDEA requirements and procedures.</p>	<p>The Program Administrator shall hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an Associate’s degree or higher and • a current CT Director’s Credential at the Initial Level or higher. 	Programs at this level are Head Start approved or meet NAEYC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.
Family child care homes.	Level 1 requires compliance with Dept. of Public Health regulations. Monitoring of Level 1 programs is performed by DPH.	See “Education and Credentials – Teaching Staff” for additional qualifications related to administration.	See “Education and Credentials – Teaching Staff” for additional qualifications related to administration.	Programs at this level hold NAFCC Accreditation. Monitoring of Level 4 programs is conducted by national organizations.



State of Connecticut Department of Education

Early Childhood Health Assessment Record

(For children ages birth – 5)



To Parent or Guardian: In order to provide the best experience, early childhood providers must understand your child's health needs. This form requests information from you (Part I) which will be helpful to the health care provider when he or she completes the health evaluation (Part II). State law requires complete primary immunizations and a health assessment by a physician, an advanced practice registered nurse, a physician assistant, or a legally qualified practitioner of medicine, an advanced practice registered nurse or a physician assistant stationed at any military base prior to entering an early childhood program in Connecticut.

Please print

Child's Name (Last, First, Middle)	Birth Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Address (Street, Town and ZIP code)		
Parent/Guardian Name (Last, First, Middle)	Home Phone	Cell Phone
Early Childhood Program (Name and Phone Number)	Race/Ethnicity	
Primary Health Care Provider:	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Black, not of Hispanic origin <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White, not of Hispanic origin <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Name of Dentist:		
Health Insurance Company/Number* or Medicaid/Number*		
Does your child have health insurance? Y N Does your child have dental insurance? Y N Does your child have HUSKY insurance? Y N		

If your child does not have health insurance, call **1-877-CT-HUSKY**

* If applicable

Part I — To be completed by parent/guardian.

Please answer these health history questions about your child before the physical examination.

Please circle **Y** if "yes" or **N** if "no." Explain all "yes" answers in the space provided below.

Any health concerns	Y	N	Frequent ear infections	Y	N	Asthma treatment	Y	N
Allergies to food, bee stings, insects	Y	N	Any speech issues	Y	N	Seizure	Y	N
Allergies to medication	Y	N	Any problems with teeth	Y	N	Diabetes	Y	N
Any other allergies	Y	N	Has your child had a dental examination in the last 6 months	Y	N	Any heart problems	Y	N
Any daily/ongoing medications	Y	N				Emergency room visits	Y	N
Any problems with vision	Y	N	Very high or low activity level	Y	N	Any major illness or injury	Y	N
Uses contacts or glasses	Y	N	Weight concerns	Y	N	Any operations/surgeries	Y	N
Any hearing concerns	Y	N	Problems breathing or coughing	Y	N	Lead concerns/poisoning	Y	N
Developmental — Any concern about your child's:						Sleeping concerns	Y	N
1. Physical development	Y	N	5. Ability to communicate needs	Y	N	High blood pressure	Y	N
2. Movement from one place to another	Y	N	6. Interaction with others	Y	N	Eating concerns	Y	N
			7. Behavior	Y	N	Toileting concerns	Y	N
3. Social development	Y	N	8. Ability to understand	Y	N	Birth to 3 services	Y	N
4. Emotional development	Y	N	9. Ability to use their hands	Y	N	Preschool Special Education	Y	N

Explain all "yes" answers or provide any additional information:

Have you talked with your child's primary health care provider about any of the above concerns? Y N

Please list any **medications** your child will need to take during program hours:

*All medications taken in child care programs require a separate **Medication Authorization Form** signed by an authorized prescriber and parent/guardian.*

I give my consent for my child's health care provider and early childhood provider or health/nurse consultant/coordinator to discuss the information on this form for confidential use in meeting my child's health and educational needs in the early childhood program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Part II — Medical Evaluation

ED 191 REV. 8/2011

Connecticut

Health Care Provider must complete and sign the medical evaluation, physical examination and immunization record.

Child's Name _____ Birth Date _____ Date of Exam _____

☐ I have reviewed the health history information provided in Part I of this form (mm/dd/yyyy) (mm/dd/yyyy)

Physical Exam

Note: *Mandated Screening/Test to be completed by provider.

*HT _____ in/cm _____% *Weight _____ lbs. _____ oz / _____% BMI _____ / _____% *HC _____ in/cm _____% *Blood Pressure _____ / _____
(Birth – 24 months) (Annually at 3 – 5 years)

Screenings

<p>*Vision Screening</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EPSTDT Subjective Screen Completed (Birth to 3 yrs)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EPSTDT Annually at 3 yrs (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment)</p> <p>Type: <u>Right</u> <u>Left</u></p> <p>With glasses 20/ 20/</p> <p>Without glasses 20/ 20/</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unable to assess</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Referral made to: _____</p>	<p>*Hearing Screening</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EPSTDT Subjective Screen Completed (Birth to 4 yrs)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EPSTDT Annually at 4 yrs (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment)</p> <p>Type: <u>Right</u> <u>Left</u></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Pass</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fail <input type="checkbox"/> Fail</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unable to assess</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Referral made to: _____</p>	<p>*Anemia: at 9 to 12 months and 2 years</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">*Hgb/Hct:</td> <td style="width: 50%;">*Date</td> </tr> </table> <p>*Lead: at 1 and 2 years; if no result screen between 25 – 72 months</p> <p>Lead poisoning (≥ 10ug/dL)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>	*Hgb/Hct:	*Date
*Hgb/Hct:	*Date			
<p>*TB: High-risk group? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p>Test done: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Date: _____</p> <p>Results: _____</p> <p>Treatment: _____</p>	<p>*Dental Concerns <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Referral made to: _____</p> <p>Has this child received dental care in the last 6 months? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>	<p>*Result/Level: _____ *Date _____</p> <p>Other: _____</p>		

***Developmental Assessment:** (Birth – 5 years) ☐ No ☐ Yes **Type:** _____

Results: _____

***IMMUNIZATIONS** ☐ Up to Date or ☐ Catch-up Schedule: **MUST HAVE IMMUNIZATION RECORD ATTACHED**

*Chronic Disease Assessment:

Asthma ☐ No ☐ Yes: ☐ Intermittent ☐ Mild Persistent ☐ Moderate Persistent ☐ Severe Persistent ☐ Exercise induced

*If yes, please provide a copy of an **Asthma Action Plan***

☐ Rescue medication required in child care setting: ☐ No ☐ Yes

Allergies ☐ No ☐ Yes: _____

Epi Pen required: ☐ No ☐ Yes

History/risk of Anaphylaxis: ☐ No ☐ Yes: ☐ Food ☐ Insects ☐ Latex ☐ Medication ☐ Unknown source

*If yes, please provide a copy of the **Emergency Allergy Plan***

Diabetes ☐ No ☐ Yes: ☐ Type I ☐ Type II **Other Chronic Disease:** _____

Seizures ☐ No ☐ Yes: Type: _____

☐ This child has the following problems which may adversely affect his or her educational experience:

☐ Vision ☐ Auditory ☐ Speech/Language ☐ Physical ☐ Emotional/Social ☐ Behavior

☐ This child has a developmental delay/disability that may require intervention at the program.

☐ This child has a special health care need which may require intervention at the program, e.g., special diet, long-term/ongoing/daily/emergency medication, history of contagious disease. *Specify:* _____

☐ No ☐ Yes This child has a medical or emotional illness/disorder that now poses a risk to other children or affects his/her ability to participate safely in the program.

☐ No ☐ Yes Based on this comprehensive history and physical examination, this child has maintained his/her level of wellness.

☐ No ☐ Yes This child may fully participate in the program.

☐ No ☐ Yes This child may fully participate in the program with the following restrictions/adaptation: (Specify reason and restriction.) _____

☐ No ☐ Yes Is this the child's medical home? ☐ I would like to discuss information in this report with the early childhood provider and/or nurse/health consultant/coordinator.

Immunization Record

To the Health Care Provider: Please complete and initial below.

Vaccine (Month/Day/Year) _____

	Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3	Dose 4	Dose 5	Dose 6
DTP/DTaP/DT						
IPV/OPV						
MMR						
Measles						
Mumps						
Rubella						
Hib						
Hepatitis A						
Hepatitis B						
Varicella						
PCV* vaccine					*Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine	
Rotavirus						
MCV**					**Meningococcal conjugate vaccine	
Flu						
Other						

Disease history for varicella (chickenpox) _____ (Date) _____ (Confirmed by) _____

Exemption: Religious _____ Medical: Permanent _____ †Temporary _____ Date _____

‡Recertify Date _____ ‡Recertify Date _____ ‡Recertify Date _____

Immunization Requirements for Connecticut Day Care, Family Day Care and Group Day Care Homes

Vaccines	Under 2 months of age	By 3 months of age	By 5 months of age	By 7 months of age	By 16 months of age	16-18 months of age	By 19 months of age	2-3 years of age (24-35 mos.)	3-5 years of age (36-59 mos.)
DTP/DTaP/DT	None	1 dose	2 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	4 doses	4 doses	4 doses
Polio	None	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses
MMR	None	None	None	None	1 dose after 1st birthday ¹	1 dose after 1st birthday ¹	1 dose after 1st birthday ¹	1 dose after 1st birthday ¹	1 dose after 1st birthday ¹
Hep B	None	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses
HIB	None	1 dose	2 doses	2 or 3 doses depending on vaccine given ³	1 booster dose after 1st birthday ⁴	1 booster dose after 1st birthday ⁴	1 booster dose after 1st birthday ⁴	1 booster dose after 1st birthday ⁴	1 booster dose after 1st birthday ⁴
Varicella	None	None	None	None	None	None	1 dose after 1st birthday or prior history of disease ^{1,2}	1 dose after 1st birthday or prior history of disease ^{1,2}	1 dose after 1st birthday or prior history of disease ^{1,2}
Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV)	None	1 dose	2 doses	3 doses	1 dose after 1st birthday	1 dose after 1st birthday	1 dose after 1st birthday	1 dose after 1st birthday	1 dose after 1st birthday
Hepatitis A	None	None	None	None	1 dose after 1st birthday ⁵	1 dose after 1st birthday ⁵	1 dose after 1st birthday ⁵	2 doses given 6 months apart ⁵	2 doses given 6 months apart ⁵
Influenza	None	None	None	1 or 2 doses	1 or 2 doses ⁶	1 or 2 doses ⁶	1 or 2 doses ⁶	1 or 2 doses ⁶	1 or 2 doses ⁶

- Laboratory confirmed immunity also acceptable
- Physician diagnosis of disease
- A complete primary series is 2 doses of PRP-OMP (PedvaxHIB) or 3 doses of HbOC (ActHib or Pentacel)
- As a final booster dose if the child completed the primary series before age 12 months. Children who receive the first dose of Hib on or after 12 months of age and before 15 months of age are required to have 2 doses. Children who received the first dose of Hib vaccine on or after 15 months of age are required to have only one dose
- Hepatitis A is required for all children born after January 1, 2009
- Two doses in the same flu season are required for children who have not previously received an influenza vaccination, with a single dose required during subsequent seasons

ANNUAL QUALITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

ConneCT 2 Quality

Connecticut's Early Childhood Quality Rating and Improvement System

Payment Matrix for Centers								
Program Size based on Total Enrollment	Tier 1 Base	Tier 1 Subsidized Enrollment (per child amount)	Tier 2 Base	Tier 2 Subsidized Enrollment (per child amount)	Tier 3 Base	Tier 3 Subsidized Enrollment (per child amount)	Tier 4 Base	Tier 4 Subsidized Enrollment (per child amount)
Small Up to 59 children	\$250	\$100	\$500	\$200	\$1,000	\$400	\$2,000	\$500
Medium 60-99 children	\$300	\$100	\$550	\$200	\$2,000	\$400	\$3,000	\$500
Large 100 – 159 children	\$350	\$100	\$800	\$200	\$3,000	\$400	\$5,000	\$500
Very Large 160 or more children	\$500	\$100	\$1,000	\$200	\$5,000	\$400	\$7,000	\$500

Payment Matrix for Family Child Care Providers			
Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 1
\$500	\$700	\$1,000	\$2,000

Projections for QRIS

SIZE OF QRIS				
Total # of Programs in QRIS in Each Level				
Home Based				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Level 1	1,487	1,450	1,344	1,238
Level 2	-	167	303	405
Level 3	-	-	100	184
Level 4	-	-	-	50
Total Per Year	1,487	1,617	1,747	1,877
Center Based				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Level 1	1,330	1,282	1,237	1,196
Level 2	-	71	109	140
Level 3	-	-	33	57
Level 4	583	605	617	645
Total Per Year	1,913	1,958	1,996	2,038
Number of Programs at Each Level				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Tier 1	2,817	2,732	2,581	2,434
Tier 2	-	238	412	545
Tier 3	-	-	133	241
Tier 4	583	605	617	695
Total	3,400	3,575	3,743	3,915

SIZE OF QRIS INCENTIVE POOL				
Total Number of Programs in QRIS in Incentive Pool				
Home Based				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Level 1	1,452	1,380	1,251	1,122
Level 2	-	167	291	387
Level 3	-	-	100	178
Level 4	-	-	-	50
Total Per Year	1,452	1,547	1,642	1,737
Center Based				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Level 1	435	394	353	312
Level 2	-	41	58	75
Level 3	-	-	24	36
Level 4	30	40	40	52
Total Per Year	465	475	475	475

Total Cost of Incentives				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Home	726,000	806,900	929,200	1,109,900
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Center	583,500	668,850	755,500	896,500
	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL:	1,309,500	1,475,750	1,684,700	2,006,400

CHILD CARE CENTER/GROUP INSPECTION FORM

☐ INITIAL INSPECTION ☐ INSPECTION ☐ FOLLOW UP ☐ OTHER

Program Name:			License Number:	Date of Inspection:	Time of Arrival:
Address:			Expiration Date:	Licensed Capacity:	
Town:			Telephone:	Under Three Endorsement:	
Operator:			Licensed For:	Instructions:	
Number of Children Present:	Number of U3 Present:	Number of Staff Present:	<input type="checkbox"/> Under Three (6wks-36m)	✓ = Compliance	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Preschool (3y-5y)	O = Non-Compliance	
			<input type="checkbox"/> School Age (5y&up)	3 = Not Observed	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Night Care (6wks&up)	4 = Not Applicable	
Hours of Operation:			Summer Care Yes/No		

Licensure Procedures 19a-79-2a

☐ 1. Local Health Inspection Date: _____

Administration 19a-79-3a

- ☐ 2. New Staff/Employee Orientation
- ☐ 3. Annual Staff Training
- ☐ 4. Documentation of Beh M. Tech Discussed w/Parents Y/N
- ☐ 5. Notification of Change
- ☐ 6. Policies: Discipline/Supervision/Child Protection/General Operating Policies/Personnel Policies/Closing Time Policy
- ☐ 7. Daily Attendance Records: Children/Staff

Items Posted: Conspicuous/Accessible

- ☐ 8. License
- ☐ 9. Current Fire Marshal Certificate Date: _____
- ☐ 10. DPH Complaint Procedure
- ☐ 11. Food Service Certificate Date: _____
- ☐ 12. Menus
- ☐ 13. Emergency Plans
- ☐ 14. No Smoking Signs
- ☐ 15. Radon Test Date: _____ Results: _____

Staffing 19a-79-4a

- ☐ 16. Staff Health Records
- ☐ 17. Professional Development
- ☐ 18. Disciplinary Actions
- ☐ 19. Designated Head Teacher/60%
- ☐ 20. Two Staff Present
- ☐ 21. Ratio: 1 Staff to 10 Children
- ☐ 22. Group Size: Maximum 20 Children
- ☐ 23. Designated Director
- ☐ 24. CPR Certified Staff
- ☐ 25. First Aid Trained Staff

Consultants 19a-79-4a

- ☐ 26. Agreements/Contracts (Signed Annually)
- ☐ 27. Logs/Visits Documented
- Early Ch. Education _____ Health _____ Dental _____
- Social Service _____ Dietitian _____

Swimming 19a-79-4a

- ☐ 28. Non-Swimmers Identified
- ☐ 29. Staff/Child Ratios
- ☐ 30. CPR Certified Staff (20 years of age)
- ☐ 31. Lifeguard Certified/Supervision

Record Keeping 19a-79-5a

- ☐ 32. Enrollment Information
- ☐ 33. Emergency Medical Permission
- ☐ 34. Authorized Released Permission
- ☐ 35. Field Trip Permission
- ☐ 36. Transportation Permission
- ☐ 37. Child Health Records/Immunizations/TB
- ☐ 38. Individual Care Plan (Signed by Parent/Staff)
- ☐ 39. Injury/Illness/Accident Reports

Health and Safety 19a-79-6a

- ☐ 40. Nutritious Snacks/Meals (Required Food Groups)
- ☐ 41. Proper Refrigeration 45°
- ☐ 42. Kitchen Separated
- ☐ 43. Hand Washing Before Eating/Food Handling
- ☐ 44. First Aid Kit(s): Indoor/Outdoor/Field Trip

Physical Plant 19a-79-7a

- ☐ 45. License Premise Clean/Good Repair/Safe
- ☐ 46. Peeling Paint Observed: Y/N, Sample Taken: Y/N
- ☐ 47. Lead Management Plan Reviewed: Y/N
- ☐ 48. Sanitary Drinking Fountains/Disposable Cups
- ☐ 49. Lead Water Test Date: _____
- Within Acceptable Limits Y/N
- On Bottled Water Y/N
- ☐ 50. Walkways Maintained
- ☐ 51. Designated Staff Toilet/Sink
- ☐ 52. All Openings for Ventilation Screened
- ☐ 53. Windows Protected to Prevent Falls
- ☐ 54. Glass Protected to 36"
- ☐ 55. Overhead Doors: Locking Devices/Spring Protectors
- ☐ 56. Exits/Hallways and Stairs Unobstructed
- ☐ 57. Individual Storage of Clothing/Bedding
- ☐ 58. Smoking Prohibited
- ☐ 59. Matches/Lighters Inaccessible
- ☐ 60. Approved Safety Outlets/Covers
- ☐ 61. Toileting Needs Met
- ☐ 62. Required Toilets/Sinks/Supplies
- ☐ 63. Potty Chairs: Nonporous/Emptied/Disinfected
- ☐ 64. Hand Washing After Toileting: Staff/Children
- ☐ 65. Ventilation in Toilet Room
- ☐ 66. Air Temp 65°, Thermometer Affixed
- ☐ 67. Water Temperature 60°-115°
- ☐ 68. Portable Space Heaters Y/N
- ☐ 69. Walls/Ceilings/Floors/Rugs: Clean/Good Repair
- ☐ 70. Rugs Secured
- ☐ 71. Hot Water/Steam Pipes Protected
- ☐ 72. Working Phone on Each Level
- ☐ 73. Emergency Numbers Posted
- ☐ 74. Adequate Lighting: 50/30 Candle Feet
- ☐ 75. Light Fixtures Shielded/Shatter Proof
- ☐ 76. Potentially Hazardous Substances Locked
- ☐ 77. Garbage/Rubbish Disposed Daily
- ☐ 78. Stairs Protected/Good Repair/Handrails
- ☐ 79. Pets: Maintained/Care Plan
- ☐ 80. Operable CO Detector on Each Level
- ☐ 81. Program Space/Adequate Sq. Ft. Per Child
- ☐ 82. Equipment Clean/Good Repair/Safe/Non-toxic
- ☐ 83. Cots Stored/Maintained/Adequate Number
- ☐ 84. Developmentally Appr. Equipment/Materials

Signature of Inspector

Appendix 4: Supporting Information

Written Corrective Action Plan

Due to DPH by: Page 295

Signature of Person in Charge

CHILD CARE CENTER/GROUP INSPECTION FORM

Program Name:	License Number:	Date of Inspection:
<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 85. Hot Tubs/Spas/Saunas: Locked/Inaccessible <input type="checkbox"/> 86. No Weapons/No Facsimile of a Firearm on Premises Outdoor Space <input type="checkbox"/> 87. Outdoor Space Adequate Sq. Ft. Per Child <input type="checkbox"/> 88. Impact Absorbing Material under Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> 89. Playground Free from Hazards <input type="checkbox"/> 90. Peeling Paint Observed: Y/N, Sample Taken: Y/N <input type="checkbox"/> 91. Lead Management Plan Reviewed: Y/N <input type="checkbox"/> 92. Equipment Anchored/Safely Arranged <input type="checkbox"/> 93. Outdoor Play Area Protected/Fenced <input type="checkbox"/> 94. Drinking Water Available/Accessible </div> <div> <u>Educational Requirements 19a-79-8a</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 95. Written Plan for Daily Program Available to Parents/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> 96. Activity Choices Include: Indoor/Outdoor _____ Fine/Gross Motor _____ Language _____ Sensory _____ Art/Media _____ Dramatic Play _____ Music _____ Self Concept _____ Health Education _____ Active/Quiet _____ Child/Staff Initiated _____ Exploration _____ Varied Choices _____ Indiv/Small Group _____ Snacks/Meals _____ Toileting/Clean Up _____ </div> <div> <u>Administration of Medications 19a-79-9a</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 97. Written Policies/Procedures <input type="checkbox"/> 98. Training Outline/Med Training Nonprescription Topical Medications <input type="checkbox"/> 99. Administration/Parent Permission/MAR <input type="checkbox"/> 100. Labeling/Storage <input type="checkbox"/> 101. Written Approval Oral/Topical/Inhalant/Injectable Medications <input type="checkbox"/> 102. Authorized Prescriber/Parent Permission/MAR <input type="checkbox"/> 103. Labeling/Storage <input type="checkbox"/> 104. Unused/Expired Meds Returned/Disposed Y/N Self Administration <input type="checkbox"/> 105. Authorized Prescriber/Parent Permission/MAR <input type="checkbox"/> 106. Labeling/Storage <input type="checkbox"/> 107. Appvd Petition For Special Medication Authorization Emergency Distribution of Potassium Iodide <input type="checkbox"/> 108. Parent Permission/Storage </div> <div> <u>Under Three Endorsement 19a-79-10</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 109. Approved Endorsement <input type="checkbox"/> 110. Ratio: 1 Staff to 4 Children <input type="checkbox"/> 111. Group Size no Larger than 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 112. Physical Barriers/Groups of 8 (Indoors/Outdoors) <input type="checkbox"/> 113. Adequate Sinks in Program Space <input type="checkbox"/> 114. Free Standing Cribs <input type="checkbox"/> 115. Washable Cots <input type="checkbox"/> 116. Chairs for Feeding/Stable/Safety Straps/Locking Tray <input type="checkbox"/> 117. Dev. Appropriate Tables/Chairs/Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> 118. Refrigerators and Food Prep Facilities Diapering Area <input type="checkbox"/> 119. Sturdy/Safety Rail/Nonporous/Exclusive Use <input type="checkbox"/> 120. Washed/Disinfected <input type="checkbox"/> 121. Disposable Paper Sheets <input type="checkbox"/> 122. Covered Waste Receptacle <input type="checkbox"/> 123. Diaper Changing Policy Posted/Followed <input type="checkbox"/> 124. Hand Washing Policy Posted/Followed </div>	<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 125. Children's Linens/Clothing/Bedding Stored Individually <input type="checkbox"/> 126. Cribs/Cots Washed/Disinfected <input type="checkbox"/> 127. Under 12 Months Placed on Back for Sleeping <input type="checkbox"/> 128. Alternate Sleep Position/Equipment Medical Documentation Y/N <input type="checkbox"/> 129. Crib/Bed Used for Infant Sleeping <input type="checkbox"/> 130. Crib/Bed Free from Observable Hazards <input type="checkbox"/> 131. Infant Toys Separate/Washed/Disinfected Daily <input type="checkbox"/> 132. No Toys/Objects Less than 1 ¼" Diameter <input type="checkbox"/> 133. Plastic Bags/Balloons/Styrofoam Objects Inaccessible <input type="checkbox"/> 134. Health Consultant/Documentation of Visits <input type="checkbox"/> 135. Infants Held for Bottles/Indiv. Attn/Tummy Time <input type="checkbox"/> 136. Written Statement/Feeding Schedule from Parent <input type="checkbox"/> 137. Unused Portions of Liquids Discarded <input type="checkbox"/> 138. Clean Bottles/Disp. Bottles/Approved Bottle Washing <input type="checkbox"/> 139. Food Served from Dish or Whole Jar Served <input type="checkbox"/> 140. Bottles Individually Identified w/Child's Name Outdoor Play Space-Under Three <input type="checkbox"/> 141. Play Space Fenced <input type="checkbox"/> 142. Outdoor Equipment Available/Developmentally Appropriate </div> <div> <u>School Age Children Endorsement 19a-79-11</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 143. Approved Endorsement <input type="checkbox"/> 144. Activity Choices Include: Free Time _____ Creative _____ Homework _____ Snacks _____ Physical _____ Special Events _____ Small Group _____ Quiet _____ Self Concept _____ <input type="checkbox"/> 145. Ratio: 1 Staff to 10 Children <input type="checkbox"/> 146. Group Size: Max. 20 Children <input type="checkbox"/> 147. Education Consultant Appropriate </div> <div> <u>Night Care Endorsement 19a-79-12 (10pm-5am)</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 148. Approved Endorsement <input type="checkbox"/> 149. Written Plan: Program Activities/Supervision <input type="checkbox"/> 150. All Staff Awake/Available <input type="checkbox"/> 151. Individual Cot/Crib/Bedding/Toiletries/Sleeping Apparel <input type="checkbox"/> 152. Sleeping Apparel/Toiletries Individually Labeled/Stored <input type="checkbox"/> 153. Bedding/Sleeping Apparel Laundered Weekly </div> <div> <u>Monitoring of Diabetes 19a-79-13</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 154. Written Policies/Procedures <input type="checkbox"/> 155. On Site Staff Trained in First Aid/Glucose Testing <input type="checkbox"/> 156. Training Current/Documented <input type="checkbox"/> 157. Supervision of Self Administration <input type="checkbox"/> 158. Equipment/Supplies: Labeled/Inaccessible <input type="checkbox"/> 159. Signed Agreement w/Parent Regarding Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> 160. Materials to be Discarded: Locked/Given to Parent <input type="checkbox"/> 161. Authorized Prescriber/Parent Permission <input type="checkbox"/> 162. Documentation of Test Results/Action Taken <input type="checkbox"/> 163. Daily Written Parent Notification </div>	
Signature of Inspector <div style="text-align: center;">Appendix 4: Supporting Information</div>	Written Corrective Action Plan Due to DPH by: <div style="text-align: center;">Page 296</div>	Signature of Person in Charge

FAMILY DAY CARE HOME INSPECTION FORM

☐ INITIAL ☐ INSPECTION ☐ REINSPECTION ☐ COMPLAINT ☐ NEW ADDRESS ☐ OTHER

Provider:	License Number:	Date of Inspection:
	Expiration Date:	Time of Inspection:
Address:	Capacity:	Instructions: ✓ = Compliance/Discussed O = Non-Compliance P = Pending
Town/State/Zip Code:	Telephone:	
<i>Consent to Inspect: I agree to allow the Commissioner or an authorized representative to have access to and inspect the facility and child care records during home visits as required by Regulations Section 19a87b-5(i).</i>		
_____ <i>Provider/Substitute's Signature</i>		

Terms of Registration 19a-87b-5

- ☐ 1. Capacity: Total # Children Present: _____
- ☐ 2. Infant/Toddler Restriction- # Present: _____
- ☐ 3. Variance-Type: _____
- ☐ 4. License Posted
- ☐ 5. Access to DPH Phone Number
- ☐ 6. Notification of Change

Qualification of Provider 19a-87b-6

- ☐ 7. Awareness of/Understanding of Regulations
- ☐ 8. Medical Statement-Exp. Date _____ TB Test
- ☐ 9. First Aid Certificate-Exp. Date _____
- ☐ 10. Personal Qualities/Good Judgment

Members of the Household 19a-87b-7

- ☐ 11. Medical Statement/TB Test
- ☐ 12. Background Check
- ☐ 13. Household Environment

Qualifications of Staff 19a-87b-8

- ☐ 14. Substitute/Assistant
Name: _____ Exp. Date _____
- ☐ 15. Emergency Caregiver
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

Physical Environment 19a-87b-9

- ☐ 16. Clean/Sanitary Environment
- ☐ 17. Freedom of Hazards
- ☐ 18. Absence of Poisons
- ☐ 19. Safe Storage of Flammables
- ☐ 20. Safe Door Fasteners
- ☐ 21. Electrical Safety
- ☐ 22. Safe Exits
- ☐ 23. Basement Supervision
- ☐ 24. Stairways: Protected/Handrails
- ☐ 25. Evacuation Plan
- ☐ 26. Fire Drills -Quarterly
- ☐ 27. Smoke Detectors
- ☐ 28. Fire Extinguisher-5 lb ABC/Installed
- ☐ 29. Auxiliary Heating System: Type _____ Approved (Y/N)
- ☐ 30. Weapons: (Y/N) Type: _____ Locked Storage (Y/N)
- ☐ 31. Safe Space-Sufficient
Indoor _____ Outdoor _____
- ☐ 32. Body of Water-Type: _____ Barrier/Fence (4ft)
- ☐ 33. Ventilation/Light/Temperature
- ☐ 34. Washing/Toileting/Sewage/Garbage Facilities
- ☐ 35. Water Supply: Public/Approved
- ☐ 36. Water Temperature: _____
- ☐ 37. Working Telephone/Emergency Numbers Posted
- ☐ 38. Safe Transportation-Registered/Insured/Restraints
- ☐ 39. First Aid Supplies
- ☐ 40. Pets: (Y/N) -Type: _____
Rabies Certificate: (Exp.) _____
- ☐ 41. Smoking Restrictions/Parents Notified

Responsibilities of Provider 19a-87b-10

- ☐ 42. Enrollment Form
- ☐ 43. Child Health Record
- ☐ 44. Immunizations
- ☐ 45. Emergency Permission Form
- ☐ 45a. Authorized Release
- ☐ 45b. Transportation Permission
- ☐ 45c. Swimming Permission
- ☐ 46. Incident Log
- ☐ 47. Confidentiality of Records
- ☐ 48. Meeting the Child's Needs
- ☐ 49. Sufficient Play Equipment
- ☐ 50. Good Nutrition: Meals/Snacks/Water Available
- ☐ 50a. Flexible and Balanced Schedule
- ☐ 50b. Proper Rest/Crib Safety
- ☐ 50c. Personal Articles: Blanket/Towel/Toilet Articles
- ☐ 51. Individual Plan for Care
- ☐ 51a. Cultural Differences/Special Needs/Dev. Appr. Activities
- ☐ 52. Infant Care: Individual Attention/Held for Bottle Feedings
- ☐ 53. Diaper Changing: Frequent/Sanitary/Hand Washing
- ☐ 54. Parent Information and Access
- ☐ 54a. Opportunities to Observe
- ☐ 54b. Immediate Access
- ☐ 54c. Discuss the Child's Needs/Policies/Records/Capacity
- ☐ 54d. Daily Information
- ☐ 54e. Informs of Accidents/Illnesses/Injuries
- ☐ 54f. Informs of Staff Names/Household Members
- ☐ 54g. Informs of Non-Immunized Child/Contagious Illness
- ☐ 54h. Access to Latest Inspection Forms
- ☐ 55. Supervision-At all Times, Indoors/Outdoors
- ☐ 55a. Personal Schedule-Alert/Competent Attention
- ☐ 55b. Full Attention-Distractions/Employment/Socialization
- ☐ 55c. Immediate Attention
- ☐ 55d. Substitute Care
- ☐ 56. Discipline/Beh. Management-Type: _____
- ☐ 56a. Notify Staff/Parents
- ☐ 57. Child Protection: Abuse/Neglect
- ☐ 57a. Notify DPH w/in 24 hrs: Death/Injury w/Hospitalization
- ☐ 57b. Report Abuse/Neglect to DCF/Police

Sick Child Care 19a-87b-11

- ☐ 58. Fever/Diarrhea/Vomiting/Rash
- ☐ 58a. Universal Precautions/Sanitary Practices

Night Care 19a-87b-12

- ☐ 59. Separate Bed/Location of Bed/Appropriate Sleepware

Administration of Medications 19a-87b-17

- ☐ 60. Provider Trained: (Y/N) Written Approval: (Y/N)
Exp. Date(s) : Oral / Topical / Inhalant _____
Injectable _____
- ☐ 61. Policies/Permissions/Storage/Outline/Curriculum

APPLICANTS PLEASE NOTE: You MAY NOT OPERATE the family day care home until all requirements have been met and a license has been issued by the Department.

Appendix 4: Supporting Information (Signature of Inspector)	Date Corrections Due By: Page 297	(Signature of Non-Provider/Substitute)
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Costs Incurred when Shifting Children from FFN Providers to Licensed FCC or Licensed Centers

Objective: Shift the proportion of children receiving Care 4 Kids subsidies over a period of 4 years so that a higher proportion of children are in regulated care and a smaller proportion are in unregulated FFN care while serving the same number of children.

Target: Over 4 years reduce the number of children in FFN care by 50%. There are a total of 3,839 children in unregulated care now and at the end of 4 years there will be 1,919 or fewer.

At the end of 4 years we hope to have a policy change that will require waivers for new children to use the Care 4 Kids subsidy for unregulated care. Waivers would be granted in the case of families needing care for non-traditional hours or for a child with special health care needs that require care in a particular setting.

	Number of Children Currently Served by FFN Providers*	Target reduction over 4 years	Number of Care4Kids Children in FFN Care			
			Projections for Year 1	Projections for Year 2	Projections for Year 3	Projections for Year 4
Infants and Toddlers	2,126	1,063 (266/year)	1,860	1,594	1,328	1,062
Preschoolers	1,713	857 (214/year)	1,499	1,285	1,071	857
Total	3,839		3,359	2,879	2,399	1,919

* Based on June 2013 count from Care 4 Kids, CT United Way

Additional Annual Expense to Serve the Same # of Children: Low Cost Estimate

Assumptions: This group of children will continue to use home-based care, e.g., licensed Family Child Care.

Age Group	New Placement Type	New FCC Placements Each Year	Additional Expense per Child	Additional Expense each Year
Infants and Toddlers	Licensed Family Child Care Home*	266	\$3,276	\$871,416
Preschoolers	Licensed Family Child Care Home**	214	\$3,536	\$756,704
Total				\$1,628,120.00

* Assume average FCC rate for infants & toddlers of \$152/week minus current cost of \$89/week (FFN rate) = \$63/week x 52 weeks = \$3,276/child

***Assume average FCC and Center rate for preschoolers of \$157/week – current cost of \$89/week (FFN rate) = \$68/week x 52 weeks = \$3,536/child

Additional Care 4 Kids Costs Each Year for 4 Years (in millions of \$)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Cost for new children served in higher quality	\$1.63	\$1.63	\$1.63	\$1.63	
Cost to sustain the new children from the previous year(s)	0	\$1.3	\$2.93	\$4.56	
Total	\$1.63	\$2.93	\$4.56	\$6.19	\$15.31

Additional Annual Expense to Serve the Same # of Children: High Cost Estimate

Assumptions:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ of new infants and toddlers served will be in licensed family child care homes, and $\frac{1}{4}$ in center based placements.
- $\frac{1}{4}$ of the preschoolers served will be in licensed family child care homes, and $\frac{3}{4}$ in center-based placements.

Age Group	New Placement Type	New Placements Each Year	Additional Expense per Child	Additional Expense each Year
Infants and Toddlers	Licensed Family Child Care Home*	200	\$3,276	\$655,200
	Licensed Child** Care Center	66	\$5,720	\$377,520
	Sub-total	266		
Preschoolers	Licensed Family Child Care Home***	53	\$3,536	\$187,408
	Licensed Child Care Center***	161	\$3,536	\$908,752.00
	Sub-total	214		
Total		768		\$2,128,880.00

* Assume average FCC rate for infants & toddlers of \$152/week minus current cost of \$89/week (FFN rate) = \$63/week x 52 weeks = \$3,276/child

** Assume average Center rate for infants and toddlers of \$199/week – current cost of \$89/week (FFN rate) = \$110/week x 52 weeks = \$5,720/child

*** Assume average FCC and Center rate for preschoolers of \$157/week – current cost of \$89/week (FFN rate) = \$68/week x 52 weeks = \$3,536/child

Additional Care 4 Kids Costs Each Year for 4 Years
(in millions of \$)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Cost for new children served in higher quality	\$2.1	\$2.1	\$2.1	\$2.1	
Cost to sustain the new children from the previous year(s)	0	\$2.1	\$4.2	\$6.3	
Total	\$1.63	\$4.20	\$6.30	\$8.40	\$20.53

2013 Program Report Card: Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC) Board of Regents for Higher Education

Connecticut

Quality of Life Result: All Connecticut children are healthy and ready for school success at age 5, contributing to a reduction in Connecticut's achievement gap.

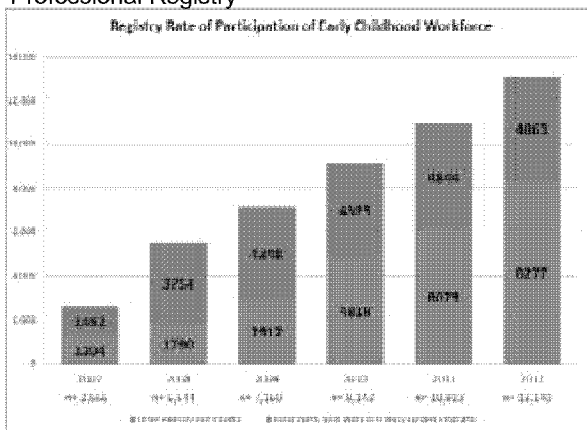
Contribution to the Result: The CCAC program helps to strengthen program quality for young children, by increasing the qualifications of those who work with young children in all sectors and settings through access to higher education and workforce advancement, while also integrating and supporting program improvement to meet national accreditation standards.

Program Expenditures	State Funding	Federal Funding(SDE/IDEA)	Other Funding(Foundation)	Total Funding
Actual SFY 12	2,994,344	60,000	58,034	3,112,378
Estimated SFY 13	3,879,344	60,000	47,000	3,986,344

Partners: Board of Regents, CT Community Colleges, 2 and 4 year colleges, Charter Oak State College, ece programs and faculty in higher education, financial aid and career counseling offices in higher education, CT Association for the Education of Young Children, local foundations, State Departments of Social Services, Education and Public Health, ECE Cabinet, Ct Head Start Collaboration Office, RESCs, United Way of CT, Save the Children, Yale School of Nursing, Child Health and Development Institute, National Association for the Education of Young Children, CT Family Day Care Association Network, CT School Age Alliance, The National Registry Alliance.

How Much Did We Do?

Performance Measure 1: Enrollment in the Professional Registry



Story behind the baseline:

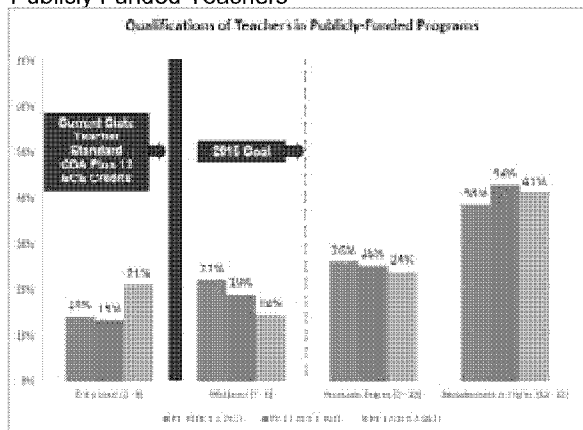
The Early Childhood Professional Registry collects data on the demographics, education and qualifications of individuals working in the early care and education field. Participation is mandatory for all staff working in state funded school readiness, child care and Head Start programs.

The above graph shows that the Registry has captured 100% of the staff in state publicly funded programs (4,863) and also houses data on 8,277 participants who do not work in programs receiving public funding. Overall Registry participation has increased to 64% of the total estimated early care and education workforce of 20,691. This is an 11% increase from last year.

Trend: ▲

Is Anyone Better Off?

Performance Measure 2: Career Ladder Levels of Publicly Funded Teachers



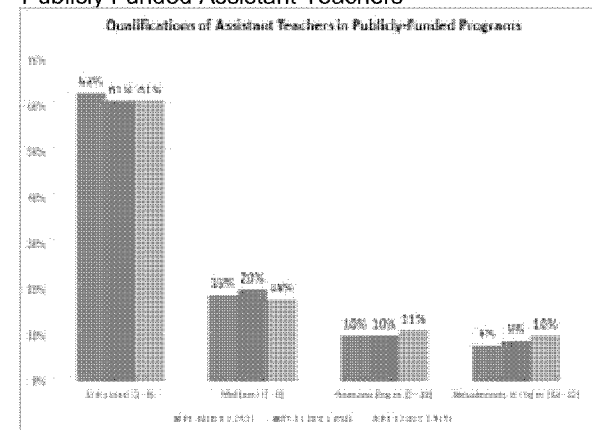
Story behind the baseline:

The current state standard for a teacher in a publicly funded program is a CDA and 12 ECE credits. This graph shows that 14% of the teachers have reached that goal, 24% are at associate's level and 41% are at bachelor's level. 65% of teachers in publicly funded programs meet or exceed the current requirements. 21% have yet to achieve the current teacher standard. Publicly funded programs currently employ 2,047 teachers, which is a 20% increase over prior year. The data above suggests that the increased workforce may be entering at the entry level. There continues to be slow but steady progress in moving the ECE workforce toward the higher 2015 goal (PA 12-50) of having 50% of teachers with a bachelor's degree and the remaining 50% with an associate's degree. This trend aligns with the use of scholarship funds.

Trend: ▲

Is Anyone Better Off?

Performance Measure 3: Career Ladder Levels of Publicly Funded Assistant Teachers



Story behind the baseline:

There is no mandated state requirement for assistant teachers in publicly funded programs.

The graph above shows that 79 % of assistant teachers do not meet the 2015 requirement for teachers in publicly funded programs. The percentage of assistant teachers with a CDA or less remains constant at 61% over the last three years.

The number who meet the state standard of a level 7 (CDA plus 12 ece credits) on the Career Ladder has decreased and the percentage that are moving to AS and BS degrees has increased slightly. This indicates there is some movement of career ladder levels by assistant teachers, as they strive to complete AS degrees.

Trend: ◀▶

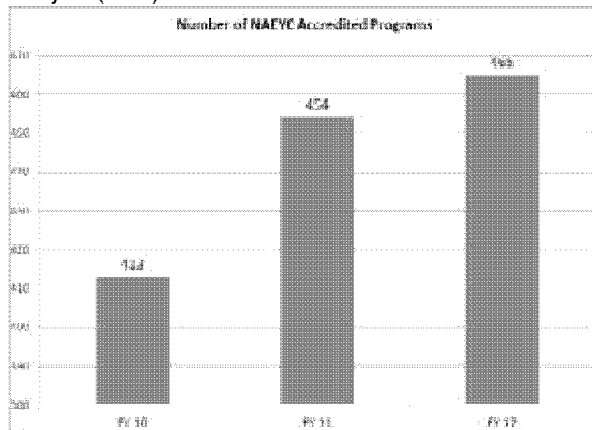
2013 Program Report Card: Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC) Board of Regents for Higher Education

Connecticut

Quality of Life Result: All Connecticut children are healthy and ready for school success at age 5, contributing to a reduction in Connecticut's achievement gap.

How Well Did We Do It?

Performance Measure 4: Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP)



Story behind the baseline:

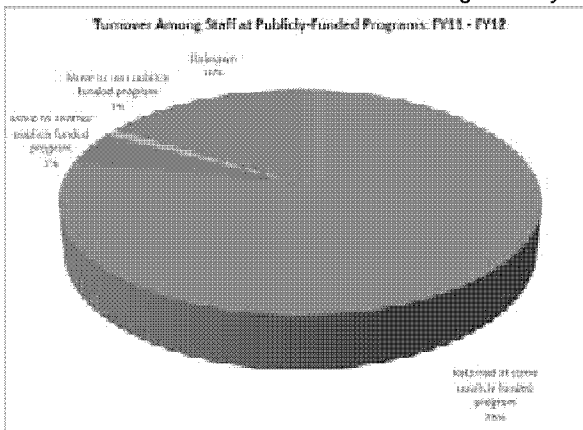
The number of NAEYC Accredited programs continues to grow in CT as we continue to be ranked third in the country in number of programs who have achieved accreditation. The requirement that publicly funded programs achieve this benchmark is a driving force, but the numbers of privately funded programs achieving NAEYC Accreditation also contributes significantly to CT's status as third in the country for accredited programs and number per capita, as quoted by NAEYC.

Nearly 70% of CT's accredited programs were enrolled in AFP or utilized support services over the past 5 years. AFP maintains a success rate of 88% of selected participants achieving NAEYC Accreditation within the 18 month time allotted to individualized support.

Trend: ▲

Is Anyone Better Off?

Performance Measure 5: Turnover among Publicly-



Funded Staff

Story behind the baseline:

In 2011, CCAC reported, in the *Connecticut Early Care & Education Workforce Report*, that the overall program (both publicly and non-publicly funded) turnover rate was 23%, lower than the national average of between 35-40%.

The chart above shows that through the term of FY 2011, the employment persistency rate among publicly funded staff is 78%. Turnover rate is 22%. Of the 22% that turned, 5% went to other publicly funded programs, 1% went to positions at programs that do not receive public funding and the other 16% are unknown. Of those that are unknown 50% were below level 7, (CDA plus 12 ece credits) 6% were at level 7, 7% were at levels 8 or 9 (AS Degree), 18% were at levels 10 or 11 (BS Degree) and 19% were level 12 and above (MS Degree).

Possible conclusions for this are that those at the lower ladder levels are no longer qualified for positions based on the education requirements or low wages. The turnover of those at the higher ladder levels could be due to people aging out of the workforce or moving into programs such as public schools, where they make increased wages.

Turnover rates are consistently linked to program quality and better outcomes for children.

Trend: ◀▶

Proposed Actions to Turn the Curve:

Measure 1: Require all staff working in a DPH child day care center, group home or family child care licensed program to enroll in the Registry and update their professional development qualifications bi-annually.

Measures 2 and 3: Continue to target scholarship opportunities and professional development for publicly funded teachers who are working on degrees to meet PA 12-50.

Continue to target scholarship opportunities and professional development for assistant teachers who are working on completing their CDA and degrees to increase career ladder levels. This will result in more staff who will meet the 2015 teacher requirements.

Measure 4: Distribute specific tools to debunk myths about accreditation and to streamline the process to remove barriers by providing facts and information on which programs can act. Direct regional AFP's to use strategies including direct phone calls and events to recruit programs. Utilize community partners such as early childhood councils and school readiness liaisons to assist the AFP to reach out to programs, to encourage involvement in program improvement activities.

Measure 5: Investigate compensation and retention approaches tied to increased staff qualifications in order to keep all levels of staff in publicly funded programs and stabilize the workforce.

Data Development Agenda:

Continue to build out data elements of the Registry in order to capture more discrete data on all staff in programs and have stronger reporting tools.

Align and broaden the Registry to work with current and future early childhood databases in the state; such as the QRIS system.

Better coordinate with data from the Board of Regents to update the Registry data files seamlessly to track the persistence of those staff that receive scholarships and complete degrees.

The Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP), established in 1991, improves the quality of early care and education programs by implementing a variety of continuous quality improvement processes; providing an on-going support system for programs as they work through the NAEYC Accreditation process; and assisting programs to achieve NAEYC Accreditation.

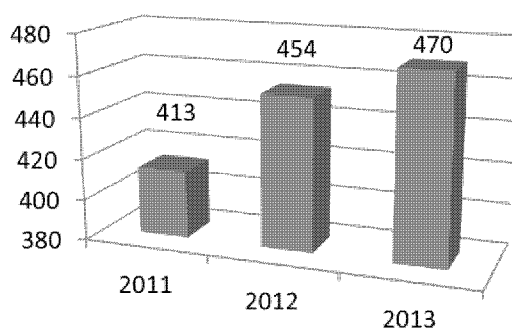
CT Accreditation Facilitation Project Services

Workshops, Study Groups, and Information Services: Any program may access these free workshops, study groups and information services, regardless of their funding status, or geographic location. These supports are marketed through brochures, email announcements, direct mailing to licensed sites, and web available postings.

Individualized Intensive AFP Support: This support includes on-site technical assistance and support by the AFP facilitator to leaders of licensed programs including administrators, lead teachers, and the self-study team. This assistance guides leaders through the four identified steps of the NAEYC process and empowers them to engage their staff in program improvement efforts to achieve NAEYC's Standards and Criteria. Through AFP, staff learn to implement the tools developed by NAEYC, and are guided through the change and improvement process. Priority for this support is provided to programs serving 20% or more enrolled families who earn 75% or less of State Median Income.

Consultative Support: Consultation is available to support programs' implementation of the NAEYC Standards and Criteria. Consultants are matched to programs based on their expertise as identified according to NAEYC's Standards and topic areas. Consultation is provided through the support of public and private funders who target specific communities and programs.

The Impact of CT AFP in the NAEYC Accreditation System

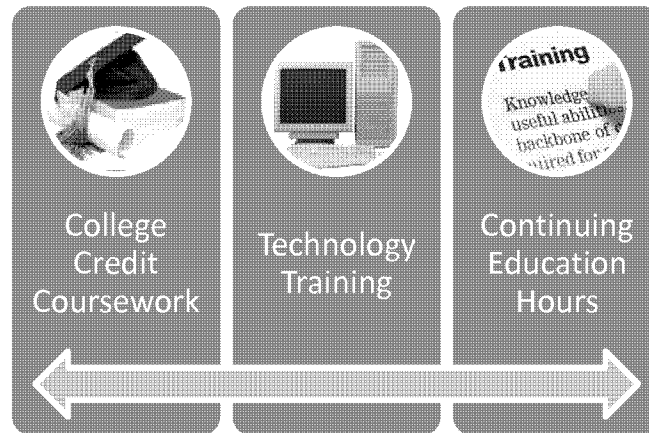


**Number of CT
NAEYC Accredited sites**

The number of NAEYC Accredited programs continues to grow in CT. The requirement that publicly funded programs achieve this benchmark is a driving force, but the numbers of privately funded programs achieving NAEYC Accreditation also contributes significantly to CT's status as third in the country for accredited programs.

Did you know that there are funds available for programs seeking NAEYC Accreditation who serve 3, 4, or 5 years old with disabilities? Visit www.ctcharts.org for more information!

Connecticut Program Leadership Initiative



Building Strong Leaders through Specialized Professional Development

Director, principal, executive director, site manager, education coordinator, assistant director...
Early childhood program leaders have many different names but they are all leaders.

Recognizing the need for specialized professional development content at the leadership level, CCAC sponsors **coursework and training opportunities** through the Program Leadership Initiative. These are designed to **improve the competency and qualifications** of Connecticut's early care and education program leaders, and meet the education qualifications and best practices established by:

- ❖ the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC),
- ❖ Connecticut Director Credential (CDC) , and
- ❖ the Department of Public Health (DPH).

College Credit Coursework: Any **current leader** in a center or school-based Connecticut program for young children is eligible. There are currently 5 different courses, each a **3-college credit, 40-hour commitment**. Classes are delivered in compact formats (typically 2 days a month over 3 months; 8am – 4pm each day) on a rotating basis. Funding typically covers tuition, registration, textbooks, and resources.

1. **Administration and Supervision of Programs for Young Children*** (Meets the **introductory survey** CDC competency area and the DPH 3-credit requirement for administrators.) *AFP considers successful completion of a survey course a prerequisite for all other sponsored courses.
2. **Leadership in Programs for Young Children** (Meets the **leadership** CDC competency area.)
3. **Finance in Programs for Young Children** (Meets the **budget/fiscal** CDC competency area.)
4. **Family and Community Involvement in Early Childhood Programs** (Meets the **community** CDC competency area.)
5. **Business Management / Personnel** (Meets the **personnel** CDC competency area.)

Technology Training: Any current program leader in a center or school-based CT program for young children, or a licensed CT family child care is eligible. Offerings include full-day training and consultation on applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, QuickBooks, Photoshop and Acrobat.

Continuing Education Hours: Eligibility is based upon the content and is announced with each offering. All professional development is linked to quality standards. Continuing Education Hours can be used to support DPH requirements, CDC Renewal, and individual professional development plans.

For more information on each course or training,
and how to apply for program administrator professional development opportunities, visit
<http://www.ctcharts.org/index.cfm?module=20&navID=nav91> or contact Margaret Gustafson
margaret.gustafson@ct.gov

All Our Kin: An Overview

All Our Kin is rooted in a fundamental belief: that children deserve equality of educational opportunity. Tragically, that equality does not exist in our country, or in our state. There are significant disparities in school success between rich and poor children, and between white children and children of color. These disparities, sometimes called the achievement gap, are especially high in Connecticut: our state's achievement gap, in fact, is the largest in the nation.

This is why our work is so crucial. The achievement gap doesn't start when a child enters kindergarten unready to learn and without the necessary skills to succeed; it begins in infancy when parents and providers are unable to offer high-quality learning experiences, interactions, and healthy, stable, dependable relationships. These children are being denied crucial opportunities for success in our society.

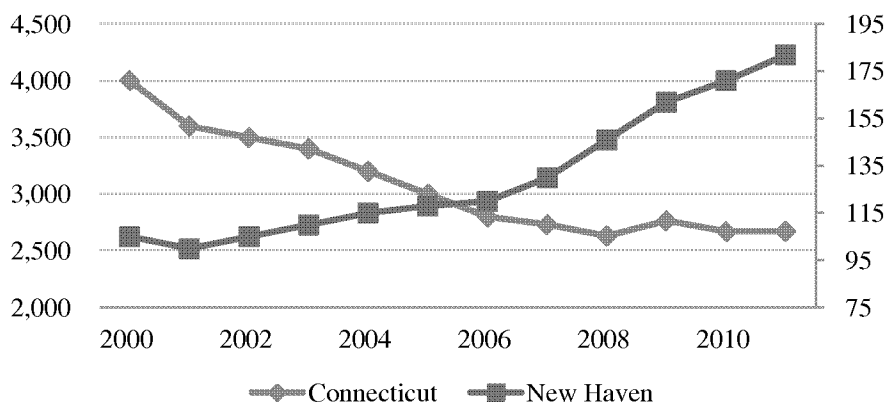
At All Our Kin, we find the caregivers who serve our youngest and most vulnerable children: women in low-income communities who are committed to giving children high-quality learning experiences. We invest in these caregivers, helping them become skilled early childhood educators, and creating sustainable programs that will serve families for years to come.

We invest in children's first teachers, offering a teaching and learning model that supports child care providers at every stage of their development. Our high-touch model of consultation and mentorship is effective in changing provider practice, resulting in high-quality learning experiences for young children during the crucial early years.

The model is win-win-win: child care providers build better lives for themselves and their own families; parents can succeed in the workforce, knowing that their children are well cared for; and most important, children develop the skills and competencies needed for success in school and in life: independence, self-regulation, empathy, creativity, curiosity, and eagerness to learn. We are creating equality of opportunity, so that children will have the chance to succeed.

Key Outcomes

All Our Kin increases the supply of licensed family child care in the community. Between 2000 and 2007, Connecticut lost more than 32% of its family child care programs. This translates into 7,500 fewer child care spaces for Connecticut's families. In New Haven, the story is very different. Thanks to All Our Kin's efforts, the number of licensed family child care programs increased by nearly 27% in New Haven during the same period. The trend has continued: see the chart below for details. The result: more affordable, safe and healthy choices for children and families.



Source: 211 Infoline

All Our Kin increases the quality of family child care. Through All Our Kin's child development classes, workshops, and hands-on educational program visits, family child care providers gain a greater knowledge of child development, and learn new strategies for supporting children and families. Providers become part of a wider professional community, with access to resources, information, and ongoing support. Internal evaluations of provider practice find that 95% of All Our Kin's family child care providers report changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes, and that over 90% of All Our Kin's family child care programs demonstrate significant increases in quality on research-based observational tools. And a study by the University of Connecticut (see below) found that over 50 percent of the providers licensed through All Our Kin go on to complete Child Development Associate credentials or associate's degrees in early childhood education.

All Our Kin has significant impacts on workforce development. In a recent study by the University of Connecticut's Center for Economic Analysis, All Our Kin graduates reported earning between \$20,000 and \$25,000 per year, with an average income of approximately \$23,000 per year; this is 10.4 percent more, on average than the average wage for industry counterparts in New Haven. 55 percent had been able to pay down debt, 42 percent had opened a savings account, and 31 percent had moved to a larger apartment or house.

In addition to its significant impact on workforce development, the Toolkit Licensing program is an important workforce support for low-income families. The University of Connecticut found that each newly-licensed provider made it possible for four to five families to enter the workforce. The combination of the program's workforce development and workforce support effects result, according to the University of Connecticut, in \$15-\$20 of macroeconomic benefits for every dollar invested.

In the words of a forthcoming external evaluation report from Opportunities Exchange: "Our key finding is that All Our Kin has been able to help increase the number of family child care providers in New Haven, their income, and their quality.... All Our Kin has a promising model for addressing [the shrinking supply of family child care providers across Connecticut]. It helps caregivers become licensed, provides new and existing licensed providers with supports to improve the quality of the care that they provide, and it is one of the key factors in the increase in the number of licensed family child care providers in New Haven."

Our track record has attracted local, state, and national attention. In 2012, All Our Kin was one of fourteen sites across the country chosen to participate in the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Frontiers of Innovation initiative; Zero to Three featured All Our Kin as an example of best practice in its white paper "Staffed Family Child Care Networks: A Strategy to Enhance Quality for Infants and Toddlers"; the U.S. Small Business Administration chose All Our Kin's executive director as its 2012 Women in Business Champion for Connecticut; and All Our Kin's directors received the "World of Difference 100 Award" from The International Alliance for Women.

Child Care Provider Orientation Project

Overview: *Improve the quality of child care provided by home based child care providers receiving Care 4 Kids subsidy through in-person orientation sessions. Participants receive an incentive payment of \$75 upon completion and a Health and Safety and Educational Material Kit for their homes.*

Health & Safety: *address key health and safety concerns by distributing the following materials to participants:*

- Fire extinguisher
- Smoke detector (with batteries)
- First Aid Kit
- Carbon Monoxide Detector
- HUSKY program literature
- Child Health Immunization and Health Record Forms

Child Development: *increase knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice with a 90 minute training on Child Development and materials distributed to support the activities in their homes*

- Stages of child development
- Importance of early literacy
- Developmentally appropriate practice and behavior guidance
- Activities for young children

Increase Capacity of Licensed Early Care Workforce: *overview of Department of Public Health licensing requirements and application process. Incentive of higher payment rates through Care 4 Kids Subsidy Program.*

- Application process
- Physical Space requirements
- Background Checks

About 2-1-1 Child care

Funded by the State, 2-1-1 Child care helps families obtain child care arrangements to best meet their needs. Child Care Referral Specialists educate parents about quality child care, provide early care professionals with technical assistance and resources, and maintains current listings of licensed and licensed-exempt care options in Connecticut.

A Snapshot of the Family Child Care Landscape in Connecticut

A Snapshot of the Family Child Care Landscape in Connecticut

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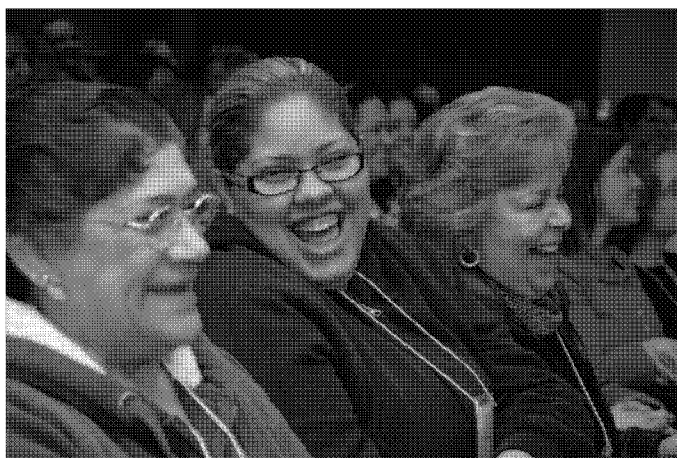
BACKGROUND

This report was commissioned by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood through a grant to All Our Kin, a Connecticut-based nonprofit that trains, supports, and sustains family child care providers to ensure that children and families have the foundation they need to succeed in school and in life.

Interviewees received a set of questions in advance and were notified that the interview would be anonymous and that none of the information they provided would be ascribed to them individually. To ensure that interviewees felt they could speak candidly, the interviewees were informed that All Our Kin would not receive any detailed information from the interviews, even though the organization had received a grant to conduct this study. The author analyzed the data and information provided by interviewees and is solely responsible for the contents of this report.

The report was designed to examine current efforts and future opportunities to support and enhance the quality of family child care across the state, particularly for infants and toddlers from low-income families. The following national and statewide research and trends served as the impetus for this report:

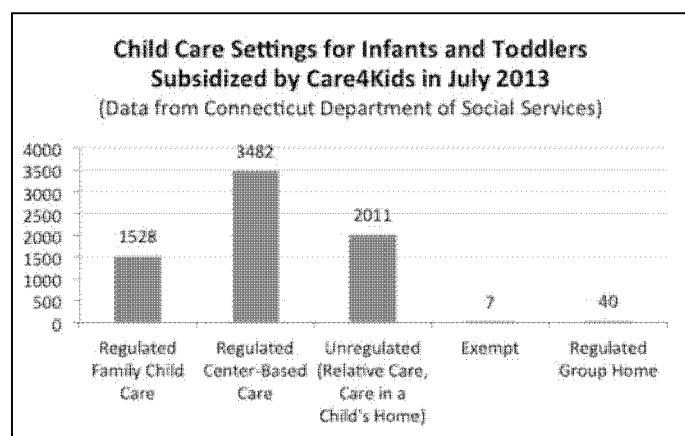
- Significant research, including Shonkoff and Phillips' *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development* report, demonstrating that the experiences children have in their first years of life—from birth to age three—are crucial to shaping the architecture of their rapidly developing brains. In their earliest years, children develop cognitive, language, emotional, and social skills that prepare them for their future lives.¹
- The desire or the need of many families to have their infants and toddlers cared for in a family child care setting. Parents may prefer family child care settings for a variety of reasons, including affordability, proximity, cultural diversity, and flexibility for parents working nontraditional hours. National research indicates that low-income families are especially likely to rely on home-based child care arrangements, including family child care.²
- The continuing short supply of high-quality infant and toddler child care, despite evidence of the positive impact that quality care has on young children, especially on low-income children. It is also often unaffordable for those families that need it most.³
- Emerging federal regulations that emphasize child care quality, including forthcoming updates to the Child Care and Development Block Grant regulations.⁴
- Growing recognition among the early childhood community that the achievement gap begins in infancy when children are not afforded high-quality learning experiences and interactions that foster healthy brain development. Stable, nurturing relationships with adults are crucial to helping children enter kindergarten prepared to learn and succeed.⁵



The inquiry process for this report focused on communities that had a significant population of children under age five, high poverty rates, and a large number of licensed family care providers. These communities included: Bridgeport, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, Middletown, New Britain, Norwalk, Groton/New London, Stamford, and Waterbury. Telephone interviews were conducted with over 25 individuals representing community-based providers, Family Resource Centers, local community early childhood collaboratives, state agency staff, advocates and private foundations.

WHERE ARE INFANTS, TODDLERS, AND PRESCHOOLERS BEING CARED FOR AND WHAT IS THE COST?

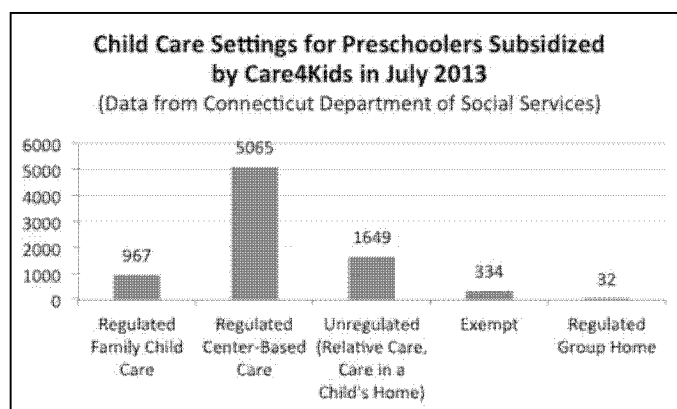
Across the state, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers are being cared for in a variety of settings, including family child care homes, early childhood centers, family, friend and neighbor care, and in their own homes by their parents. For the purposes of this report, we define infants and toddlers as children up to 3 years and preschoolers as children ages 3 and 4.



Source: "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services.

According to the Department of Social Services (DSS) Care4Kids July 2013 payment report, 6,973 of the infants and toddlers currently being cared for in out-of-home settings are low-income children whose care is subsidized by Care4Kids payments. An additional 7,858 preschool-age children receive out-of-home care subsidized by Care4Kids.⁶

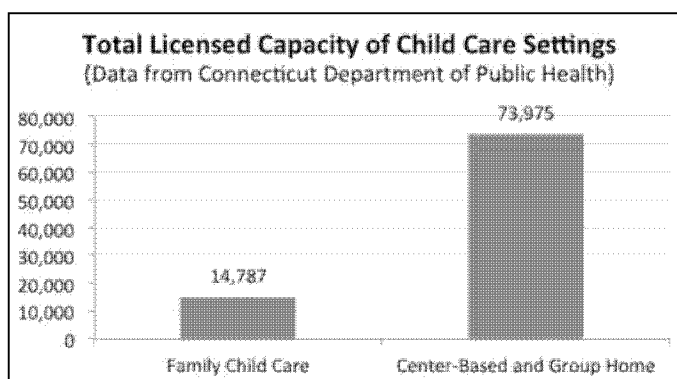
- DSS reports that 2,011 infants and toddlers and 1,649 preschoolers receiving care subsidized by Care4Kids are in unregulated family, friend and neighbor care. There may, in fact, be many more children whose care in these settings is unreported.
- Family child care providers care for 1,528 infants and toddlers and 967 preschoolers who receive Care4Kids subsidies.
- Overall, 50% of infants and toddlers and 33% of preschoolers receiving Care4Kids dollars are cared for in some kind of home-based setting.



Source: "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services.

Collecting accurate data on the capacity of child care settings, the actual enrollment and the vacancy rate for infant and toddler and preschool slots is a challenge, as some providers choose not to operate at full capacity and it is difficult to track children who have changed caregivers. Little is known about actual enrollment, particularly for children whose care is not subsidized by Care4Kids.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health maintains information on the licensed capacity of different child care settings. Its most recent information suggests that home-based providers have the capacity to care for nearly 15,000 children. Individual providers may care for a maximum of 2 children under the age of 2 at any time, unless they employ an assistant, which increases the limit to 6.

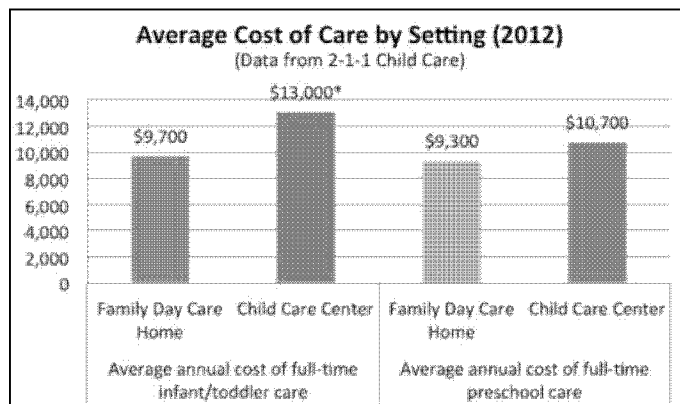


Source: "Child Day Care Centers and Group Day Care Homes Total by Date (Active)" and "Family Day Care Homes Total by Date (Active)," Connecticut Department of Public Health, Accessed September 13, 2013.

The 2-1-1 Child Care *Fall 2012 Child Care Capacity, Availability and Enrollment Report* provides another source of information on capacity and enrollment in Connecticut child care settings. Most of the data compiled by 2-1-1 Child

Care is self-reported, based on an annual provider survey. According to 2-1-1 Child Care, 15,357 infants and toddlers and 34,040 preschoolers currently receive care in out-of-home settings.⁷ (Since 2-1-1 Child Care defines infant/toddler and preschool age ranges differently for family child care and child care centers, data on numbers of children enrolled in each of these two settings is not comparable).

According to the 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, child care imposes a heavy financial burden on many families in the state. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that child care costs not exceed 10% of parental income.⁸ Yet in Connecticut, parents paying the average cost for full-time care for one infant can expect to pay 15% of the state's median family income, with the annual cost of care for an infant or toddler ranging from \$7,000 to \$20,000 in either a child care center or a family child care home.⁹ The average cost of full-time care for one infant and one preschool age child together totals 27% of median family income.



*This value is an estimate. According to 2-1-1 Child Care, the average cost of care is "just under \$13,000."

Source: *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, 2-1-1 Child Care, July 2013.

Family child care is significantly less expensive than center-based care. The average annual cost of full-time infant/toddler care in a family child care program is \$9,700, compared to just under \$13,000 in a child care center (a difference of 34%). The average annual cost of full-time preschool care in a family child care program is \$9,300, compared to \$10,700 in a child care center (a difference of 15%).¹⁰



In state fiscal year 2012, the Care4Kids program subsidized care for approximately 24,000 children. The average monthly child care benefit was \$593.¹¹ The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that provider payment rates be set at the 75th percentile of the market rate, meaning that parents would have a choice among 75 percent of providers within a community. However, Connecticut sets payment rates at only 60% of the market rate. Since Care4Kids reimbursement rates have not been adjusted since 2002, rates are currently set at 60% of the 2001 market rate.¹²

HOW ARE FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS CURRENTLY BEING SUPPORTED?

A variety of local and statewide organizations currently support family child care providers across the state, including:

■ All Our Kin

All Our Kin is a non-profit organization that offers a wide array of programs aimed at helping individuals to obtain state licenses for family child care businesses, build business skills, and gain the knowledge and skills to deliver quality care that contributes to early childhood development. All Our Kin seeks to support child care providers at every stage of their development, from caregivers to professional educators and business people. Its four primary program services are the Tool Kit Licensing Program, which supports and guides individuals through the licensing process; the New Teacher Mentor Project, which supplies programmatic coaching to new providers through regular home visits; the Family Child Care Network, which is a staffed network that provides regular meetings with peers for professional development, mentorship, training, an annual conference, and one-on-one consultations to address educational, and business issues; and Early Head Start, through which providers receive intensive support to serve Early Head Start eligible children and meet Early Head Start's federal standards of quality. All services are offered in English and Spanish. All Our Kin was founded in New Haven in 1999 and currently works with family child care providers in greater New Haven and northeastern Fairfield County with potential plans for continued expansion.

■ 2-1-1 CHILD CARE

2-1-1 Child Care is a free, multilingual resource that helps families across Connecticut find child care arrangements to best meet their needs. 2-1-1 Child Care offers access to Child Care Referral Specialists who educate parents about quality child care; provides technical assistance for early care professionals; collects statewide child care data and statistical information; and maintains current listings of licensed and license-exempt child care options throughout the state. 2-1-1 Child Care also provides information on child growth and development to unlicensed child care providers; helps providers successfully start or improve their child care business by offering information on business practices, communicating with families, routines and scheduling and effective environments; provides early child care training for parents and providers on choosing quality child care, early literacy, oral language development, child development and emergency preparedness; and provides in-home educational visits to new providers through the Family Child Care Career Support Project.

■ Connecticut Family Day Care Associations Network, Inc. (CFDCAN)

Over 25 years ago, CFDCAN was established with support from the Connecticut Department of Social Services to connect local associations and the 6,500 family child care providers then practicing across the state into a statewide network for quality improvement and policy advocacy. At one point, the association had funding to support a paid staff person and a mentor program; however, these aspects of the association have been dormant for the last ten years. The association is currently being revived by a volunteer who last year organized a statewide conference that was attended by both family child care and family, friend and neighbor care providers.

■ Family Day Care Associations

2-1-1 Child Care lists 23 family day care associations serving approximately 110 communities across Connecticut; however, only a small percentage of these associations are active and able to reach out to and engage large numbers of providers.¹³ In most cases, these are informal, volunteer efforts to create networking and professional development opportunities for family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

■ Family Resource Centers

The State Department of Education funds 72 Family Resource Centers in 41 communities across the state.¹⁴ A required but limited role of the Family Resource Centers is to provide support and training for family child care providers who reside in the neighborhoods where the Family Resource Centers are located. Family Resource Centers offer training and technical assistance to family child care providers, serve as an information and referral system for child care needs, and coordinate with other community resources. Additionally, local foundations such as the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving fund community-based family resource centers that are not supported by the State Department of Education.

■ The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative

The Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative is an initiative of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, a United Way Partner agency and a family child care association. The Collaborative promotes and supports high-quality child care with programs that have an educational component serving children under age 12. The Collaborative serves as a resource hub for over 40 communities in the Greater Hartford region. The Collaborative provides technical assistance, a child care resource library, and a networking forum; maintains statistical information on many aspects of child care; works to increase universal access to quality programs;

educates the public about the importance of high-quality child care; and enhances planning and coordination of child care services. Over 300 organizations and individuals are members of the Collaborative.¹⁵

HOW ARE LOCAL COMMUNITIES LOOKING AT FAMILY CHILD CARE?

With public and private support from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the State Department of Education and the Children's Fund of Connecticut, 37 communities have developed comprehensive birth to age eight community plans through their local Early Childhood Councils as part of the Discovery Initiative.¹⁶ However, only 17 include strategies for improving the quantity and/or quality of licensed family child care.

The chart below displays the communities that have included family child care strategies in their comprehensive community plans based on an analysis by the Memorial Fund. The infant and toddler care data is from the 2-1-1 Child Care 2012 *Child Care Capacity, Availability and Enrollment Report*; the Care4Kids payment data is from the Department of Social Services July 2013 payment report; and the population data is from the Connecticut Data Collaborative (ctdata.org).

Local Early Childhood Council representatives report that they are doing all they can just to address their communities' center-based preschool needs. Due to their lack of available resources and limited administrative capacity, few are implementing strategies to address family child care quality and availability.

School Readiness Councils across the state primarily focus on center-based programs, not family child care providers. Before statewide quality enhancement funding was transferred from the Department of Social Services to the State Department of Education (now under the purview of the Office of Early Childhood), School Readiness Councils were required to set aside 10% of these funds for family, friend, and neighbor care. At least some of these School Readiness Councils used these funds for professionalization efforts. For example, the New Haven School Readiness Council used these dollars to support the creation of the Family Child Care Tool Kit Licensing Program.

When the statewide quality enhancement funding was transferred to the State Department of Education, the 10% set-aside for family, friend and neighbor care was eliminated so that the 19 Priority School District School Readiness Councils would have full autonomy to respond to local needs. Over two-thirds of the 19 Priority School

Community Plans with Family Child Care Strategies

	Population under age 5 ¹⁷	Children under 18 living in poverty ¹⁸	Number of family child care programs ¹⁹	Number of infants/toddlers supported by:		
				Care4Kids subsidies in unregulated home-based care ²⁰	Care4Kids subsidies in regulated family child care ²¹	Care4Kids subsidies in center-based care ²²
Bridgeport	10,731	10,469	125	189	230	437
Bristol	3,416	1,462	50	42	26	72
Colchester	892	150	19	1	3	9
Danbury	5,409	1,455	26	15	19	106
East Hartford	3,339	2,829	60	90	51	71
Hamden	3,179	743	52	27	40	43
Hartford	9,452	14,731	133	370	184	187
Mansfield	572	409	7	0	0	4
Meriden	4,090	3,036	47	69	26	117
Middletown	2,559	1,224	36	36	20	58
New Britain	5,043	5,102	40	130	49	118
New Haven	9,150	9,784	174	219	196	209
Norwalk	5,883	2,193	53	26	27	114
Stamford	8,309	3,278	67	45	37	58
Torrington	2,081	1,157	32	21	14	45
Waterbury	7,920	9,318	103	180	121	227



District School Readiness Councils have continued to use a percentage of their quality enhancement funding for family, friend and neighbor care and/or include family, friend and neighbor caregivers in their professional development activities.

HIGHLIGHTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY EFFORTS

BRIDGEPORT: Through the efforts of the Family Resource Centers and All Our Kin, 127 family child care providers participated in the Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) training and received in-program consultations. Bridgeport Family Resource Centers also provide targeted training to family, friend and neighbor caregivers. All Our Kin expanded into Bridgeport in 2012.

BRISTOL: The Family Resource Center provides six to eight trainings per year and offers financial incentives to participating family child care providers to buy materials for their programs. It also pays for family child care providers to attend national and statewide trainings sponsored by other organizations. Bristol has a very active family child care association and about 50% of providers participate.

HARTFORD: Key leaders and organizations in the city of Hartford have been working collaboratively for years to create a quality system of care for children birth to age five that includes family child care. Through the City of Hartford, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and

the Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative, a significant percentage of family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers have access to a range of training and professional development opportunities in the areas of literacy, child development, and health and nutrition. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, through the Brighter Futures Initiative, funds six community-based family centers. Of particular note, the Southside Family Center operated by Catholic Charities provides intensive in-program consultation to family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers through the HomeLinks project.

NEW HAVEN: Family child care has been a long-standing priority for the Early Childhood Council and its partners. The Council has worked closely with All Our Kin since 2002 to develop programmatic offerings for family child care programs: the Tool Kit Licensing Program was developed by the Council's Home Care Committee in partnership with All Our Kin and the Connecticut Children's Museum. The Council works to include family child care providers in its training and professional development opportunities. Initiatives specifically targeting family child care include Mornings at the Museum (educational visits to the Connecticut Children's Museum) and WORDS (a literacy coaching and enrichment initiative that includes both centers and family child care programs). Family child care providers are an integral component of New Haven's professional child care community.

NORWALK: The director of the Fox Run Family Resource Center has consistently made family child care and family, friend and neighbor care a priority both for the Family Resource Center and the broader community. Recently, the Early Childhood Collaborative held an evening meeting specifically to accommodate family child care providers. All Our Kin has begun providing services in Norwalk, and delivered a six-month long training on Growing Healthy Children in partnership with the Family Resource Center. The School Readiness Council allocates a portion of its quality enhancement funding to the Family Resource Center to provide programming for family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers. The Family Resource Center is also working with the Norwalk Housing Authority to explore family child care as an employment opportunity.

WATERBURY: Waterbury Bridge to Success and local funders are focused primarily on children birth to age three and on improving the quantity and quality of community supports. In the summer of 2013 All Our Kin partnered with Waterbury Bridge to Success, the Leever Foundation, Waterbury Youth Services and two family child care associations to provide Early Learning Guidelines training to providers.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE STATE LEVEL?

There are many system-building initiatives and professional development efforts underway at the state level with the potential to greatly impact Connecticut's family child care landscape.

System-Building Initiatives

The Office of Early Childhood

On June 24, 2013, Governor Dannel Malloy signed an executive order establishing the Office of Early Childhood as the lead agency to coordinate and deliver the state's early childhood services, which were previously spread across five state agencies.²³ The legislature allocated \$128 million to the Office of Early Childhood in the 2013-2014 budget, most of which was previously spent by other departments. The Office of Early Childhood will be responsible for many of the programs and funding that support family child care, including licensing child daycares, managing Care4Kids, and negotiating the 2-1-1 Child Care contract with the United Way of Connecticut. Dr. Myra Jones-Taylor has been appointed as the Executive Director of the Office of Early Childhood.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

QRIS is a method to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings.²⁴ A fully functioning QRIS includes the following components: (1) quality standards for programs and practitioners, (2) resources and an infrastructure to help caregivers meet such standards, (3) monitoring and accountability systems to ensure compliance with quality standards, (4) ongoing financial assistance that is linked to meeting quality standards, and (5) engagement and outreach strategies.²⁵ The goals of Connecticut's QRIS are to provide families with the information they need to make informed choices and to provide all early childhood settings with the tools needed to improve quality, so that all children statewide are provided with the opportunity to have high-quality early learning experiences. The Early Childhood Cabinet established a QRIS workgroup in the spring of 2012. In November 2012, the QRIS workgroup presented their recommendations, which included guiding principles for QRIS and recommendation summaries for governance, structure, standards, licensing, accreditation and approval, rating and monitoring, subsidy, incentives, and system phase-in.²⁶ The workgroup recommended the creation of a system that includes both center-based and family child care providers, with standards that are equivalent but reflect the differences across settings.

Early Learning and Development Standards

In partnership with the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, the State Department of Education is working to develop comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards for children birth through age five that are aligned with kindergarten through grade 12 standards in all areas of development. Once the standards are finalized and adopted, a dissemination and capacity-building process will be developed. The group working on the standards has been thoughtful about the need for strategies to disseminate the standards to parents, family child care providers, and family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

Core Knowledge and Competencies

Core Knowledge and Competencies are a set of expectations that describe what early childhood educators should know and be able to accomplish. The Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency workgroup of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet presented a draft core knowledge and competency framework to the Early Childhood Education Cabinet in September 2013. The draft framework includes seven domains: building meaningful curriculum; using developmentally effective approaches for teaching and learning; promoting child development and learning; observing, documenting and assessing young children; building family and community partnerships; promoting health, safety and wellness; and professionalism. The framework also defines indicators and levels for each domain. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards that outline the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that children ages birth to age five should know and be able to do are woven throughout the domains. Work going forward includes outlining the competencies for multiple early childhood roles and developing technical assistance and professional development plans and evaluation measures.²⁷ The Core Knowledge and Competencies will be applicable to early childhood educators across settings, including family child care.

CSEA-SEIU Local 2001

In September 2011, Governor Malloy signed an executive order that gave family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers the ability to “meet and confer” with the state. In 2012, legislation was passed for full collective bargaining rights by the union. The union, through the leadership of home-based providers, is now in full negotiations with the state to increase caregivers’ compensation and the quality of care, particularly for those serving the most vulnerable children across the state. Providers are seeking to stabilize and retain an experienced and trained child care workforce, make family

child care affordable, expand access, and ensure that professional development and other work supports (e.g., paid sick time, substitutes) are routinely available. Once a contract is negotiated, the home-based provider leaders will form a union council and the 4,000 providers will be asked to sign on as members and pay dues. The union has been approved as a health care “assister” under the Affordable Care Act and will be working to enroll the estimated 2,000 home-based providers who do not have health insurance.

Professional Development Efforts

Early Learning Guidelines Training and Technical Assistance

In 2011, the Connecticut Department of Social Services invited All Our Kin to use a coaching and consultation approach to train family child providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers in the new infant and toddler guidelines. All Our Kin partnered with Family Resource Centers and other community-based organizations across the state to reach family child care providers. Two training series were offered in 2011 and 2012. Five hundred and fifty-two family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers in 31 communities were trained in the new guidelines and received in-program consultation visits (Appendix A). All Our Kin is conducting a new series of trainings in Spanish in the fall of 2013.

Raising Readers

In 2013, the Connecticut State Department of Education and Capital Region Education Council (CREC) developed a statewide Raising Readers pilot program specifically for home-based child care providers. The Raising Readers Parent Club Program is a nationally-recognized family literacy program. The Home-Based Child Care Providers Program was designed to give child care providers the skills and tools to foster literacy development. Providers received new books for their libraries and books to send home to the families of the children in their care. CREC trained facilitators from 16 agencies that represented approximately 15 communities across the state, and these facilitators in turn have trained 117 family child care providers and family, friend and neighbor caregivers.

Circle of Security

In the fall of 2013 All Our Kin began running five Circle of Security cohorts with family child care providers: two in New Haven (one English, one Spanish), two in Bridgeport (same), and one in Norwalk (English only). Circle of Security is a relationship-based caregiver education program designed to enhance attachment and relationship quality. Consultation from the Yale Child Study Center is supporting All Our Kin’s evaluation of the program’s effectiveness.

WHAT ARE THE GAPS AND CONCERNS ACROSS THE STATE?

A large number of interviewees commented on the need for more statewide attention to the quality of family child care, particularly because it is the primary care setting for a large proportion of infants and toddlers across the state. A majority of respondents expressed concern, given what we now know about brain development, that more resources are not devoted to enhancing the quality of family child care.

Several common themes emerged from the interviews with regard to the limitations of current program capacity:

1. Limited ability to reach family child care providers:

Establishing personal, trusting relationships with family child care providers is a prerequisite for quality improvement. Based upon the data provided by interviewees, approximately 25% of the licensed family child care providers across the state are being reached by existing local and state organizations and programs. Family child care associations provide informal networking opportunities but are not active in all communities and very few have paid staff. Those that are active only reach a small percentage of the licensed child care providers and friend, family and neighbor caregivers. The capacity across Family Resource Centers varies. As resources for Family Resource Centers decline,

so do the services for family child care providers. A 2009 evaluation report conducted by Yale University of the Family Resource Centers noted that the State Department of Education has put greater emphasis on Family Resource Center programs that target parents (e.g. Parent as Teachers). The report noted that 35% of Family Resource Center services are dedicated to Families in Training, 34.4% to preschool and school age child care, and only five percent to training child care providers.²⁸ As a result, many Family Resource Centers have become, at their core, home visitation and parent education programs.

2. Limited in-program quality enhancement supports:

Family child care providers tend to be isolated and operate as independent small businesses. Because they care for children full-time and rarely have access to substitutes, it is difficult for family child care providers to attend training and professional development opportunities during the day. Moreover, best practices in adult learning indicate that real time modeling, mentoring, and coaching is a more effective approach to improving quality. In Connecticut, only a handful of programs have the capacity to provide ongoing, in-program coaching and support, including All Our Kin and Southside Family Center.



3. Public perception of family child care:

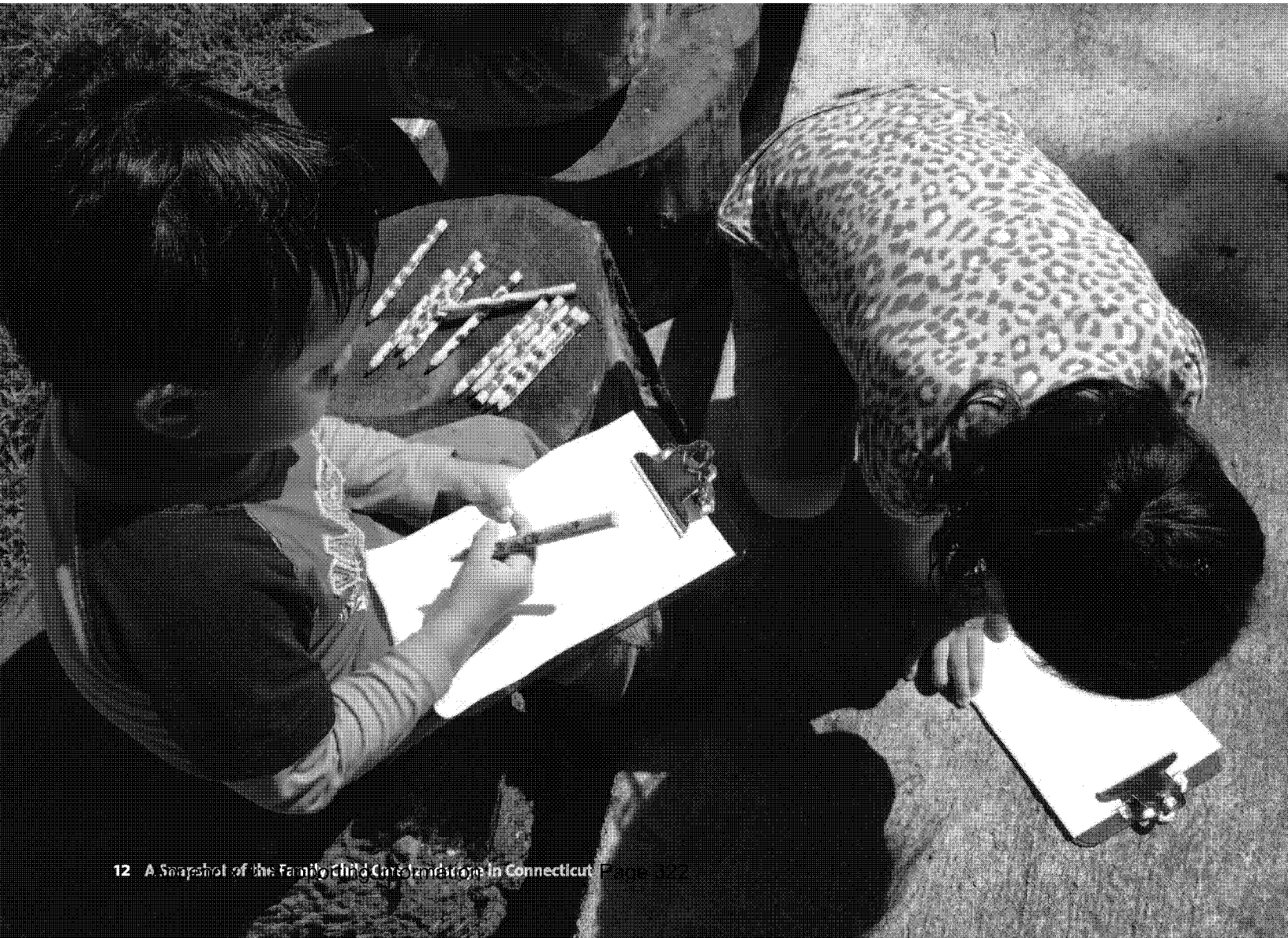
Interviewees reported that much of the public still believes that family child care is babysitting, not quality early care. This has led many community leaders and parents to push for three-year-olds to be cared for in center-based settings, which they perceive as quality environments. Some interviewees posited that this perception may also be a result of lack of information about the quality of care in family child care programs.

4. Low compensation for family child care providers:

There has not been a rate increase in Care4Kids for eleven years. This creates financial challenges for providers and has contributed to an unstable family child care workforce. Besides parent fees, Care4Kids is the only source of revenue for providers. As more three-year-olds are served in center-based settings, family child care providers encounter additional financial challenges because licensing regulations require that family child care providers can only care for two children under the age of two, unless they employ a substitute, which raises their limit to six.

5. Limited family child care state-level policy and advocacy:

When the Connecticut Family Day Care Association Network (CFDCAN) was active and staffed in the early 1990s, family child care providers had a direct voice in public policy. CFDCAN provided substitutes and often arranged for transportation for family child care providers to attend state-level policy meetings and attend legislative hearings. As CFDCAN funding decreased, fewer providers were able to make their voice heard at the state level. Many of the interviewees noted that family child care issues and strategies to improve quality are not prominent on the agenda of statewide advocacy groups, which further contributes to family child care providers being overlooked. It was noted by several interviewees that All Our Kin has become the most visible proxy voice for family child care providers in a number of statewide efforts including the QRIS workgroup and the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance.



INTERVIEWEES' SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Overall, interviewees resoundingly supported any efforts to enhance the quality of family child care, especially for infants and toddlers. They often cited national research studies that indicate that effective programs include qualified and appropriately compensated personnel, language-rich environments, developmentally appropriate curricula, safe physical settings, and warm and responsive adult-child interactions.

Interviewees noted that statewide efforts to promote and implement a system of quality family child care are promising but fragmented, and not systemically supported by statewide policies or funding. Interviewees also noted that sustained outreach and in-program consultations are critical strategies to improve the quality of family child care and friend, family and neighbor care but that the majority of current programs do not have the capacity (staff or funding) or the skills to provide quality in-program consultation.

The following is a summary of interviewees' suggestions for creating a system of quality supports for family child care providers.

1 Identify a statewide quality enhancement intermediary:

This intermediary could serve as the statewide knowledge and resource broker that would systematically build local capacity by working with Family Resource Centers, professional development programs, day care associations and other community based organizations. The intermediary would be the single point for funding that could be allocated to community programs to increase their organizational capacity and skills. Intermediary staff would train others to deliver quality in-program consultations and would monitor the quality of the services provided. A significant amount of planning work would need to be done to identify and/or create an organization to function as this intermediary. Additionally, new resources would need to be secured to support and sustain the intermediary.

2 Create regional family child care networks: A report by Zero to Three indicates that staffed family child care networks are an effective strategy for enhancing the quality of family child care, particularly for infants and toddlers.²⁹ These networks typically offer one-on-one technical assistance and individualized professional development, conduct program visits frequently, and use formal quality assessment tools. They have at least one paid staff person who provides ongoing oversight and support to family child care providers across a particular geographic area, rather than an entire state. According to



this report, many states, including Connecticut, have a dearth of these networks. All Our Kin was cited as the only staffed family child care network in Connecticut. These networks would need to have staff on the ground in communities with the largest number of providers and have expertise in child development in order to provide quality in-program consultations and network-wide trainings. The network staff could either provide services directly, in partnership with Family Resource Centers, or both.

3 Increase funding to Family Resource Centers: Although Family Resource Centers are required to support family child care providers as a core component of their State Department of Education grant, this work is not a funding allocation priority for the State Department of Education.³⁰ Family Resource Center directors report that overall their funding has been declining and, as a result, Family Resource Centers do not have sufficient resources to hire qualified staff to work solely with family child care providers or the skill to provide in-program coaching and support.

4 Expand All Our Kin's Reach: The majority of interviewees noted that All Our Kin, more than any other organization, has the skills, knowledge and capacity to effectively reach out to and engage family child care providers. Several individuals and private funders noted that although it would take a significant infusion of resources, given the results that All Our Kin has had, it should consider expanding its reach and directly provide its quality services in more places.

In summary, there is still a lot of work to do in Connecticut to improve the quality of family child care, particularly for infants and toddlers. However, there is also much to build on both at the local community and statewide level. It seems the time is ripe to harness people's passion for focusing on our youngest children birth to age five, to break the cycle of poor child outcomes and to narrow the achievement gap for our low-income children.

APPENDIX A: All Our Kin Early Learning Guidelines Participant Data 2011–2012

Community	Number of Family Child Care Providers Trained	Community Partners
Ansonia	6	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Beacon Falls	3	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Bloomfield	21	The Alliance for Bloomfield's Children
Bridgeport	127	Roosevelt and Cesar Batalla Family Resource Center, Dunbar Family Resource Center, Barnum Family Resource Center
Bristol	24	Parent & Child Center at Bristol Hospital, Bristol Family Resource Centers
Clinton	2	Second Homes Family Child Care Association
Derby	3	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Enfield	20	Alcorn Family Resource Center/Enfield KITE
Hartford	67	Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Hartford, Southside Family Center
Hebron	5	Today's Child Care Association
Madison	1	All Our Kin, Second Homes Family Child Care Association
Meriden	9	Meriden Family Resource Centers
Naugatuck	2	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
New Britain	16	New Britain Family Resource Center
New Haven	25	All Our Kin
New London/Groton	5	Child & Family Agency of SECT
Norwalk	39	Fox Run Family Resource Center, Norwalk Early Childhood Council
Norwich	24	Norwich Human Services
Old Lyme	11	LEARN's Pawcatuck/Stonington, Family Resource Center
Oxford	1	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Plainville	6	Plainville Family Resource Network
Seymour	9	Valley Council for Child Care Home Providers
Shelton	8	Family Centers
Southington	21	Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington
Stamford	45	Family Centers
Stratford	15	Stratford Public Schools, Stratford Parents' Place, A division of the Stratford Health Department
Tolland	18	Family Resource Center at Birch Grove
Torrington	3	The Family Resource Center at Vogel-Wetmore Elementary School and The Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative
West Hartford	8	West Hartford Public Schools, The Bridge Family Center
West Haven	8	All Our Kin, West Haven Family Day Care Provider Network
TOTAL	552	Prior to 2011, All Our Kin conducted Early Learning Guidelines training for 23 New Haven providers and 7 from neighboring communities. In addition, All Our Kin has conducted two trainings in Waterbury for 46 providers with more locations scheduled for the fall of 2013.



APPENDIX B: Statewide Family Day Care Associations

FAMILY DAY CARE ASSOCIATION	TOWNS SERVED*
All Our Kin	Bethany, Bridgeport, East Haven, Fairfield, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Norwalk, Orange, Shelton, Stratford, Trumbull, West Haven, Westport, Woodbridge
Asociación de Proveedoras Profesionales Hispánicas	Waterbury
Bolton Providers Network	Bolton
Brass City Child Care Providers	Bethlehem, Cheshire, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Thomaston, Waterbury, Watertown, Wolcott, Woodbury
Casa Otoñal	New Haven
CFDCAN	Statewide
Child Care Providers of West Hartford	West Hartford
Child Care Resources of Central CT	Bristol, Burlington, Farmington, Harwinton, Litchfield, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington, Wolcott
Family Child Care Providers Association	Andover, Bolton, Colchester, Coventry, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Glastonbury, Hebron, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, South Windsor, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Willington, Windsor, Windsor Locks
Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative	Andover, Avon, Bloomfield, Bolton, Burlington, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Somers, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, Windsor Locks
J.P. Vincent Family Resource Center	Bloomfield
Kid Kare	Hartford
Love-n-Learn Child Care	Beacon Falls, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, Waterbury, West Haven
Lower Fairfield County Family Day Care Association	Stamford
Northwest CARE	Barkhamsted, Goshen, Harwinton, Litchfield, New Hartford, Northfield, Torrington, Winchester
Professional Child Care Network	Bridgeport, Derby, Fairfield, Monroe, Shelton, Stratford
Second Homes Child Care Association	Branford, Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haven, Essex, Guilford, Killingworth, Madison, North Branford, Westbrook
Southington Day Care Providers	Berlin, Cheshire, Plainville, Southington
Today's Child Care Association	Colchester, Coventry, East Haddam, East Hampton, Haddam, Marlborough, Portland, Salem
Valley Child Care Providers	Andover, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Derby, Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton
West Haven Family Day Care Provider Network	West Haven
Wethersfield Family Child Care	Cromwell, Glastonbury, Hartford, Newington, Rocky Hill, Wethersfield
Windham Area Child Care Association	Andover, Canterbury, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry, Franklin, Hampton, Hebron, Lebanon, Mansfield, Scotland, Sprague, Windham

*Note that this information is provided by 2-1-1 Child Care. The towns served by individual Family Day Care Associations have not been independently verified.

APPENDIX C: State Department of Education Family Resource Centers (2012–2013)

TOWN	FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER
Bloomfield	Laurel School
Branford	Indian Neck School
Bridgeport	Cesar A. Batalla Elementary School, Dunbar School, Roosevelt School, Barnum School
Bristol	South Side School, West Bristol School, Greene-Hills School
Danbury	Mill Ridge Intermediate School, Morris Street School
East Hartford	Silver Lake School, Hockanum School, Franklin H. Mayberry School
East Haven	D.C. Moore School
East Windsor	Broad Brook Elementary School
Enfield	Enfield Street School
Groton	Catherine Kolnaski Magnet School
Hamden	Church Street School, Ridge Hill School
Hartford	Ramon E. Betances School, Martin Luther King Jr. School, America's Choice at SAND, Latino Studies Academy at Burns, Maria Sanchez School, Clark Street School
Hebron	Gilead Hill School
Killingly	Goodyear Early Childhood Center
Manchester	Washington Media Arts Magnet School
Meriden	John Barry School, Roger Sherman Elementary, Benjamin Franklin School
Middletown	Commodore Macdonough School, Farm Hill School
Milford	Mathewson School
New Britain	Jefferson School, Smalley Academy, Smith Elementary
New Haven	Wexler/Grant School, Katherine Brennan School, Hill Central School, Fair Haven School, Ross Woodward Classical Studies Magnet School
New London	Jennings School, Nathan Hale School
North Branford	Jerome Harrison Elementary School
Norwalk	Fox Run Elementary School, Side by Side Charter School, Naramake Elementary School
Norwich	Wequonnoc School, John B. Stanton Elementary
Plainfield	The Early Childhood Center
Plainville	Linden Street School
Plymouth	Plymouth Center School
Stonington	West Broad Street School
Stratford	Stratford Academy/Johnson House
Tolland	Birch Grove Primary School
Torrington	Vogel-Wetmore School
Vernon	Maple Street School
Waterbury	H.S. Chase School, Woodrow Wilson School, Jonathan Reed Elementary School
West Hartford	Charter Oak Academy
Putnam	Putnam Elementary School
Stafford Springs	West Stafford School
Stamford	Rogers International Magnet, Westover School
West Haven	Savin Rock Community School
Winchester	Batcheller Early Education Center
Windham	North Windham School, Natchaug School
Windsor	Oliver Ellsworth School

Endnotes

- ¹ Stephanie Schmit and Hannah Matthews, *Better for Babies: A Study of State Infant and Toddler Child Care Policies*, Center for Law and Social Policy, August 2013: <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/BetterforBabies2.pdf>, citing Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, eds., *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000.
- ² Diane Paulsell, Toni Porter, and Gretchen Kirby, "Supporting Quality in Home-Based Child Care." Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., March 31, 2010. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/supporting_brief.pdf
- ³ Stephanie Schmit and Hannah Matthews, *Better for Babies: A Study of State Infant and Toddler Child Care Policies*, Center for Law and Social Policy, August 2013, citing Shonkoff, et al., *From Neurons to Neighborhoods*, 2000.
- ⁴ "HHS announces actions to improve safety and quality of child care," U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, May 16, 2013. <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2013pres/05/20130516a.html>
- ⁵ "The Science of Early Childhood Development: Closing the Gap Between What We Know and What We Do." National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, January 2007. http://developingchild.harvard.edu/index.php/download_file/-/view/67/
- ⁶ "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services, <http://www.ctcare4kids.com/files/2013/09/July-2013.pdf>
- ⁷ "2012 Child Care Availability Survey Summary by Age Group, Region, and Service Type: Fall 2012," 2-1-1 Childcare. This is the most recent report available from 2-1-1 Childcare. <http://www.211childcare.org/professionals/Capacity2012/2012Statewide.pdf>
- ⁸ 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, July 2013, citing Child Care Aware of America, *Parents and the High Cost of Child Care*, 2012.
- ⁹ 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, July 2013.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, citing Care 4 Kids, Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting, 2012.
- ¹² 2-1-1 Child Care *Connecticut Child Care and Affordability Report*, July 2013.
- ¹³ "Statewide Family Day Care Associations." 2-1-1 Child Care. <http://www.211childcare.org/professionals/associations.asp>. Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ¹⁴ "Connecticut State Department of Education Family Resource Centers 2012-2013 (Revised 1-25-13)." Connecticut State Department of Education. <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Family/FRC/FRCcontacts.pdf>. Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ¹⁵ "Who We Are." Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative. http://www.hacc.info/matriarch/OnePiecePage.asp_Q_PageID_E_16_A_PageName_E_WhoWeAre. Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ¹⁶ Discovery is an initiative of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund that works to improve the early school success of young children. The Discovery Initiative is in the ninth year of a 14-year investment. Discovery offers grants and capacity building to 52 communities and six statewide partners. Discovery communities are creating comprehensive birth to age eight local action plans. The plans enable communities to remain focused and to measure their progress toward school success for every child.
- ¹⁷ "Total population, Under 5 Years, Number (2010)," Connecticut Data Collaborative, ctdata.org.
- ¹⁸ "Total population, Income in the past 12 months below poverty level, Under 18 years, Percent (2006-2010)." Connecticut Data Collaborative, ctdata.org.
- ¹⁹ "Annual Capacity, Availability and Enrollment Survey for Family Day Care Homes: 2012," 2-1-1 Child Care. <http://www.211childcare.org/professionals/Capacity.asp>
- ²⁰ "Number of Children Paid by Age Category and Service Setting: July 2013." Connecticut Care4Kids, Connecticut Department of Social Services, <http://www.ctcare4kids.com/files/2013/09/July-2013.pdf>
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ Kathleen Megan, "Malloy Creates New Office of Early Childhood," *The Hartford Courant*, June 24, 2013. http://articles.courant.com/2013-06-24/news/hc-early-childhood-office-0625-20130624_1_executive-order-executive-director-legislation. Accessed September 13, 2013.
- ²⁴ QRIS National Learning Network, glossary of terms <http://www.qrisnetwork.org/>
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ "A Quality Rating and Improvement System for Connecticut: QRIS Workgroup Recommendations to the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet," QRIS Workgroup, June 2013.
- ²⁷ The Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework draft report, the Early Childhood Workforce Workgroup to the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet, September 2013.
- ²⁸ Matia Finn-Stevenson, Ph.D., *Evaluation of the Connecticut Family Resource Center Program*, Yale University, 2009.
- ²⁹ Zero to Three National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, *Staffed Family Child Care Networks: A Strategy to Enhance Quality Care for Infants and Toddlers*, 2012.
- ³⁰ Matia Finn-Stevenson, Ph.D., *Evaluation of the Connecticut Family Resource Center Program*, Yale University, 2009.

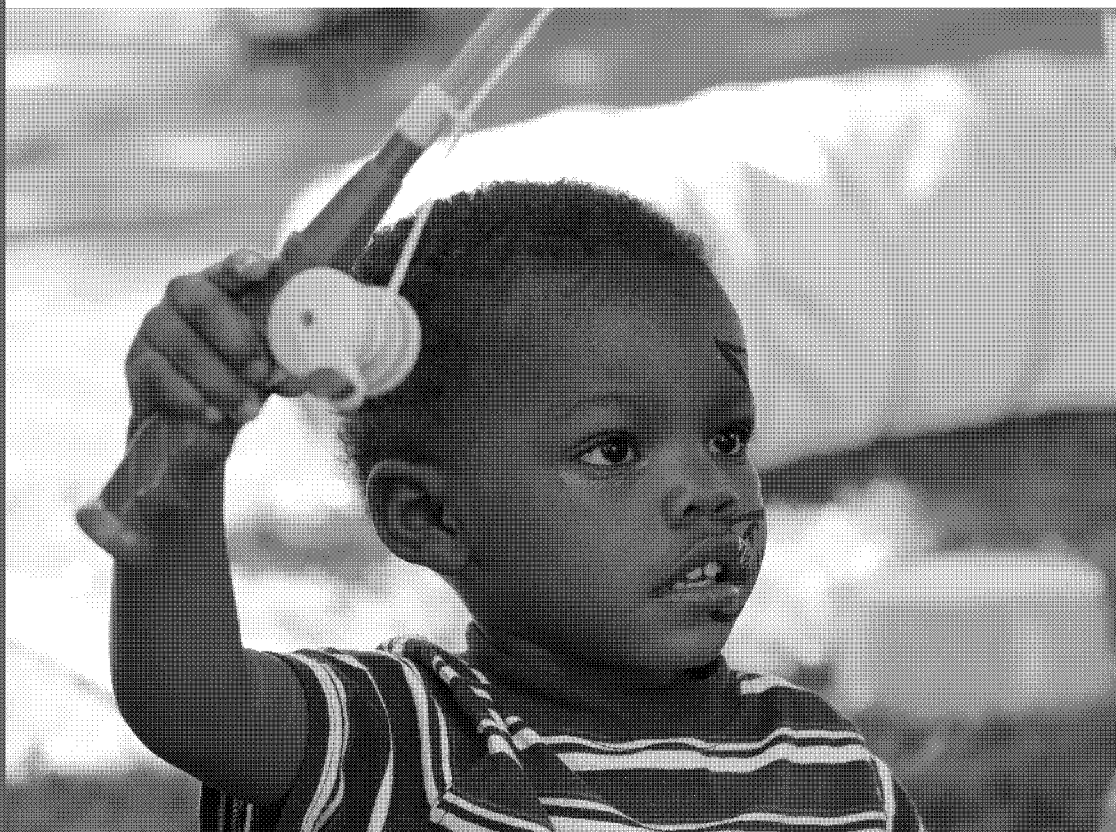




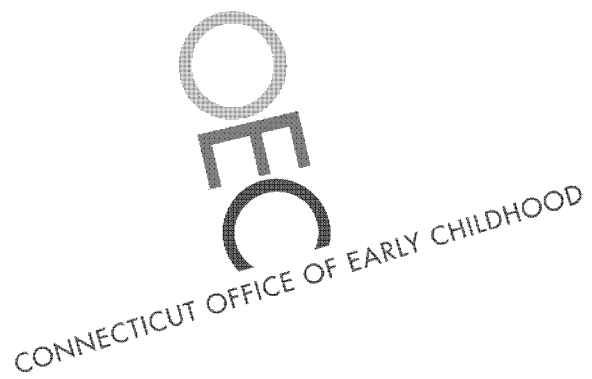
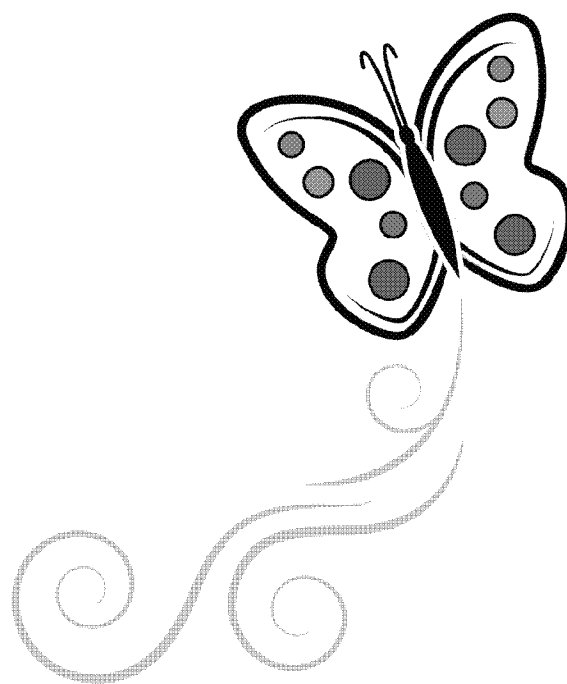
CTELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

*What children, birth to five,
should know and be able to do*



*Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards
were developed to help families, communities and schools
work together to support children's early learning and growth.*



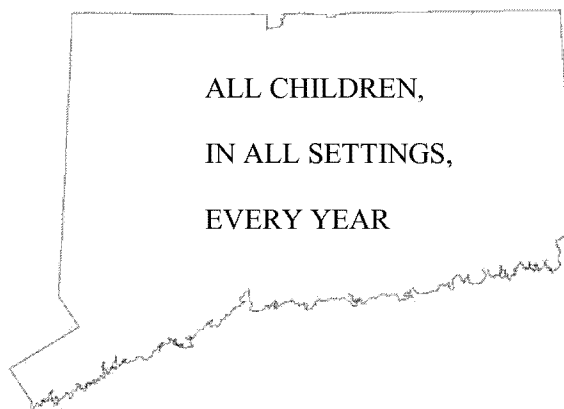
Photos taken by Leah Grenier at the Connecticut Early Learning Block Party held in Bushnell Park on August 24, 2013.

I am pleased to introduce Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELD Standards) which serve as the foundation for supporting ALL young children in Connecticut, no matter where they live, play, and learn. ELD Standards are statements of what children from birth to age five should know and be able to do across the earliest years of development.

The learning progressions within the Early Learning and Development Standards promote:

- Equity for all children, through the setting of high, but appropriate, expectations;
- High quality early learning experiences, by providing clear goals and trajectories of learning;
- Provision of individual support based on where children are along the path of growth and development;
- Families' understanding of what their children are learning and how they can support them;
- Teachers' understanding of age appropriate content and approaches to children's learning; and
- Communication across sectors based upon these common goals for the children supporting together

The ELD Standards were developed through the work of the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet and its Learning Standards Workgroup. In addition, over 100 state and national experts participated in some way during the development process, helping to ensure a strong and comprehensive set of ELD Standards.



Connecticut's vision is that all young children will have high quality learning experiences, across all types of settings, and that children's growth and development will be supported across every year of their lives. CT's ELD Standards serve as a foundation for achieving this vision as they provide the basis for planning learning environments, supporting individual children, and communicating around common goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Myra Jones-Taylor".

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Connecticut Office of Early Childhood

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Connecticut's Early Learning and Development (ELD) Standards

Development Process

Early learning and development standards are statements of what children from birth to age five should know and be able to do at various ages across their earliest years of development. These learning progressions serve as guides for the adults who support children's growth and development over time, providing a basis for planning experiences and providing support through the early childhood years. Connecticut's newly drafted Early Learning and Development Standards will serve as the foundation for supporting ALL young children, no matter where they live, play and learn.

The Governor's Early Childhood Education Cabinet, along with the Connecticut State Department of Education and the newly formed Office of Early Childhood, has devoted significant fiscal and human resources to creating rigorous and developmentally appropriate Early Learning and Development Standards. This process has taken place over the course of 2 ½ years, with development completed in October of 2013.

Background Work

As a part of Connecticut's 2009 application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for Head Start State Advisory Councils, Early Learning Standards were identified as a priority area. The goal for this priority area was: By September 2013, Connecticut will adopt comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards that reflect a progression of skills birth through age five, aligned with kindergarten through grade 12 standards. A workgroup to address this goal was selected with the intention of ensuring wide cross sector input. The first meeting of the Learning Standards Workgroup was convened on June 22, 2011 and included representatives from the CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet, the CT Department of Education, Head Start, higher education, early intervention, the Regional Education Service Centers, home care

provider networks, public schools, and the local chapter of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. A full list of workgroup members and their affiliations can be found in Appendix A.

The Learning Standards Workgroup relied heavily upon two guiding documents to inform the process of standards development:

- The Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE): Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success (NAEYC, 2012)
- Early Learning Guidelines Resource: Recommendations and Issues for Consideration When Writing or Revising Early Learning Guidelines (Scott-Little, Kagan, & Frelow, 2010)

In order to provide a strong background for members, the workgroup reviewed both current Connecticut documents and other state and national sets of early learning standards. After the members had an opportunity to explore the specific characteristics of these documents they found valuable, the group began addressing the various issues set forth by Scott-Little, Kagan & Frelow (2010) including: guiding principles, age ranges and groupings, domains and subject areas, and the structure of the standards.

In the fall of 2011, shortly after the workgroup began this process, the United States Department of Education released its Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge application. Connecticut opted to address early learning and development standards as a key strategy under Focused Investment Area C of the Early Learning Challenge. The efforts of the Standards Workgroup were coordinated with the CT Leadership Team for the Race to the Top application



and a detailed plan was developed for the learning standards work. Although funding was not granted to Connecticut, the plan outlined in the application has served as a guide for the continued work of the Standards Workgroup.

The specific steps in the development process are outlined below. These efforts have involved many local and national experts in addition to the contribution of the Standards Workgroup members. A full listing of those who have contributed to the various stages of this work is included in Appendix B.

Alignment and Gap Analysis

The first critical step in creating new ELD standards was a detailed and thorough alignment and gap analysis of CT's current learning standards. The workgroup chose to draw upon existing documents as much as possible, both in an effort to ease the transition to new ELD standards and to effectively capitalize on previous investments and resources used in creating standards documents. Determining the existing alignments of standards and identifying gaps involves intensive consideration of documents which often have very different structure and language. Below is a list of the various alignment projects conducted in support of the development

of new ELD standards. The information gathered through this work was integral to the development of draft ELD standards.

- Comparison of Common Core State Standards and Connecticut's preschool standards (the CT Preschool Curriculum Framework): This process involved CSDE consultants as well as outside local experts in the area of Mathematics and English Language Arts. The alignment between documents was examined and a crosswalk document including guidance for practice was issued.
- Comparison of Connecticut's preschool standards (the CT Preschool Curriculum Framework) and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: The CSDE and the CT Head Start Association engaged in an intensive and collaborative process to determine the alignments and gaps between these two documents. This process involved rating the degree of matches found, a cross check for agreement on the matches, and the reconciliation of any discrepancies. The completion of this work resulted in the report: Crosswalk between the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

and the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks (CT Head Start Association, 2012).

- SRI International's Standards Alignment Study. This study included the following documents: CT's Preschool Curriculum Framework, CT's Kindergarten Science Curriculum Standards, CT's Kindergarten Social Studies Framework and the CT Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning. A full report dated May 30, 2012, detailed the process and outcomes of this study. (Hebbeler and Taylor, 2012)

Drafting New Standards

On June 25 and 26, 2013, groups of experts in each of the identified domains were gathered to create a first draft based upon the structure outlined by the Learning Standards Workgroup. Each group utilized the information from the alignment and gap analysis studies, additional resources and research (including other state standards documents, K-12 standards and research) and crafted an initial draft of new birth to five standards across 7 age bands.

This initial draft was reviewed by multiple experts throughout the state for further refinement in July and August of 2012. These reviewers considered the initial draft ELD standards from one of several perspectives:

- Domain specific feedback including:
 - Breadth, depth and relative difficulty of skills addressed
 - The age appropriateness of the indicators
 - The placement of the indicators within the domain
 - The wording of the indicators
- The cultural relevancy of the indicators for

diverse populations

- The appropriateness of the indicators for children who are dual language learners
- The appropriateness of the indicators for children with special needs

Finally, EASTCONN, the acting fiduciary of the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet, worked with CSDE to synthesize the input and make revisions based upon the expert input. This resulted in the draft ELD standards.

Content Validation

The Standard Workgroup decided to adhere to the recommended practices for standards development set forth by Scott-Little, Kagan & Frelow (2010). Requests for Proposal were issued for both a Content Validation Study and an Age Validation Study. The review of the proposals submitted resulted in the recognition that additional funding would be necessary to support a methodologically sound research age validation study. However, as a result of the RFP process, the CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet entered into a contract with the National Association for the Education of Young Children to conduct a Content Validation Study. This study involved gathering feedback from national experts as to whether the skills, knowledge, and dispositions in Connecticut's new Early Learning and Development Standards reflect critical, comprehensive goals and a continuum of growth and development. This study was completed in September 2013 and revisions to the draft standards were made as a result of this report (Snow, 2013).

The content validation study contributed greatly to the robust and thorough process Connecticut engaged in to create new Early Learning and Development Standards, thereby ensuring that our efforts to support ALL CHILDREN, IN ALL SETTINGS, EVERY YEAR, are based on the strongest of foundations: sound Early Learning and Development Standards.

Guiding Principles

All children benefit from rich learning environments in homes, communities and early care and education settings. Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards provide the basis for supporting children's growth and development across settings. The following principles guided the work on the early learning and development standards.

The guiding principles are grouped into four broad categories: Young Children, Families, Early Learning Environments and Communities. The first category, Young Children, addresses what is known about young children's learning and development. The other categories address the roles and responsibilities of families, early childhood environments and communities in supporting children's health, learning and development.

These principles must be considered when this document is used to support children in any early learning environment. Although this document articulates learning standards for children from birth to age 5, these same principles apply throughout the early elementary years.

Young Children:

- ***Are capable and competent.*** All children are capable of achieving positive early learning and developmental outcomes. There should be high expectations for all young children, regardless of their background, experience, language or developmental status.
- ***Learn best when their basic needs are met.*** Basic needs of young children include health (physical, mental, and oral), safe and nurturing environments, positive social relationships, a sense of belonging, and sound nutrition. If these basic needs are not met a child's growth and development will be affected.
- ***Are unique in their growth and development.*** Each child will demonstrate knowledge,

skills and abilities within a broad range at any point in time. All children within an age range should not be expected to arrive at each benchmark at the same time. Variation in the growth and development of skills and competencies applies to all young children regardless of age, ability, developmental status or special health care needs. Respect and support for individual differences in achieving learning outcomes should be a cornerstone of early learning.

- ***Develop and learn within the context of their family and culture.*** Each child's family and culture lays the foundation of who they are and how they learn and grow.

Families:



- ***Are the primary caregivers and educators of young children.*** Families lay the foundation for their children's success, through their relationship with their child and by providing experiences that are critical for their children's growth and development.
- ***Are critical partners in all early learning environments.*** It is important for families to be actively engaged with their child's early care and education. Ongoing communication and an active partnership are necessary to ensure positive outcomes; therefore, families must be supported as partners in all early learning environments.



Early Learning Environments:

- ***Support young children to learn in the context of relationships.*** Positive interactions and sustained relationships with family members, caregivers, teachers and other children provide the foundation for learning. Every child, including those with social, emotional or behavioral challenges, should be provided the supports and services necessary that will promote ongoing positive relationships with peers and adults.
- ***Reinforce the importance of the cultural context of young children, families and communities.*** Cultural context influences behavioral expectations, personal preferences, relationships and sense of self. It is imperative each child's culture be respected and honored.
- ***Provide opportunities for active exploration.*** Young children construct their own understanding of the world around them through exploration and engagement with a variety of materials, experiences, and interactions with both peers and adults. Every child should be provided the opportunity to actively explore, engage and interact by providing the supports necessary to ensure a child's full and active participation within an environment.
- ***Provide meaningful inclusion of children with special needs.*** Participation in these inclusive settings may require individualized modifications, adaptations and/or support services designed to provide each child with opportunities to benefit from inclusion in an early learning environment.

- ***Provide experiences that are relevant and integrated across domains of development.*** Developmental domains and content areas are highly interrelated. Children learn best when experiences incorporate multiple domains. Children with special health care needs, delays or disabilities should be provided the individualized supports needed to promote positive developmental outcomes in all areas.
- ***Intentionally promote the development of skills and knowledge.*** Planning and decision-making should be based upon research and best practices related to how young children grow and develop.
- ***Provide opportunities for children to benefit from diversity.*** Diversity (e.g. culture, ability, socioeconomic status, family constellation) provides opportunities for children to learn about the broader world.
- ***Support children's language development in their primary language.*** Children's success in their primary language supports their growth and development across all domains, including acquisition of a second language. Early learning environments may provide opportunities for children to use their primary language and should support families in speaking and reading to their children in the language(s) they prefer.

Communities:

- ***Believe that all children deserve high quality early learning experiences.*** They value families and invest in systems that support young children, families, and early learning environments.
- ***Offer a variety of resources that support early growth and development.*** Thriving communities provide supports for children and families including medical, social, and educational opportunities for children, families, and caregivers.
- ***Strategically plan to meet the needs of children and families.*** They plan together using information relevant to the unique circumstances in their community. This includes facilitating smooth transitions within and between programs and settings.

About this Document

Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) are statements of what children should know and be able to do from birth to age 5. These guidelines are intended to inform families, teachers, caregivers, and other professionals about common developmental and learning progressions, so that they can work together to better support children's early learning and growth. This set of standards is intended to serve as a guide for considering the steps in children's development and then using this information to plan ways to support children in continued growth.

Organization of the Standards

The CT ELDS are organized by domain. There are eight domains in the document: Social and Emotional Development, Physical Health and Development, Language and Literacy, Creative Arts, Mathematics, Science, Cognition, and Social Studies. For each domain, there is a general Information page that includes a brief description of the domain and strategies to support infants and toddlers as well as preschoolers. This Domain Information Page is followed by the standards which are organized by strands, learning progressions and indicators at various age bands.

Domain: A general area of growth and development

Strand: Sub-categories within each domain

Learning Progressions: A series of skills and abilities that build upon each other as children grow and learn

Indicators: Examples of what children should know or be able to do at the end of each of the age ranges along the learning progression

Numbering: The indicators are numbered using an abbreviation for the domain name, the number corresponding to the age in months at the end of the age range, and the number of the indicators in sequence for that age range. For example, L.24.3 refers to 3rd indicator for the 18-24 month range in the Language and Literacy Domain.

Age Ranges

The ELDS are grouped into age ranges, with the examples representing skills, dispositions, or knowledge typical for the end of the age range for each domain. However, children develop at varying rates and may not demonstrate every example included in the ELDS or may demonstrate it with some variation in timing. While a pattern of skills that are not consistent with a child's age may raise some questions, the ELDS is not a screening or assessment tool. Concerns about a child's development may suggest a referral for further assessment or possible support services; however, this document is not designed as a tool for identifying children for referrals, services, or to make decisions about appropriate programs or placements. Instead, this tool is designed to support caregivers and professionals to consider precursors and next steps and to determine the environmental supports, activities, and adult strategies that will help children to grow and learn.



Domain Name

Learning Progression		Creative Arts			
Age Range		0-6 months	6-12 months	12- 18 Months	18-24 Months
		Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>
Learning Progression		Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to engage in and enjoy the arts.			
	Music	CA.6.1 React to music by turning to a sound source, cooing in response, wiggling or moving, soothing one's self, etc.	CA.12.1 Show interest in singing, moving, and dancing, using their body	CA.18.1 Use instruments to explore rhythm and melody	CA.24.1 React to changes in music by joining in with more extended segments of familiar music using voice, physical gestures and/or instruments

Indicator

The domains and strands within the ELDS reflect common areas of research and evidence-based practices. Although you may see other documents or resources that break down what children should know and be able to do into categories different from the ELDS, the structure and content of these standards are consistent with what is known about child development.

Children do not learn skills in these domains, strands or learning progressions in isolation, but it is generally useful to think about growth across these areas to make sure that support is provided for the wide variety of skills children are learning. When planning early learning experiences, families and early care and education professionals should consider what is meaningful and engaging for young children and how skills from a variety of areas can be integrated into children's play.

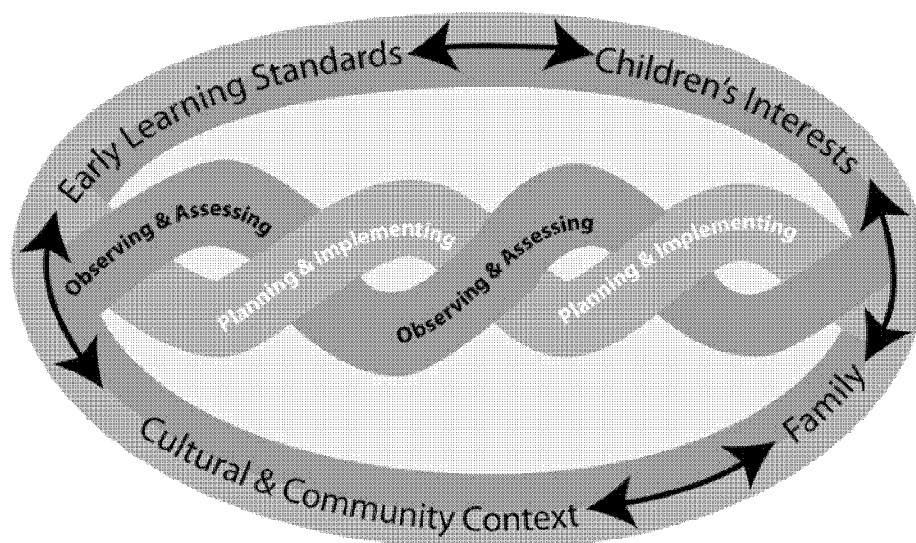
Supplemental Dual Language Development Framework

In addition to the information for each domain, this document includes a Supplemental Dual Language Development Framework for use in supporting children who are learning multiple languages. This supplement is not applicable to all students, but rather is designed to raise awareness of the typical stages of acquiring a second language.

Intentionally Supporting Growth and Development

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards provide the basis for planning learning environments, supporting individual children, and communicating around common goals. They do not exist in isolation and must be used in conjunction with guidance on effective strategies and/or appropriate assessment tools. The "Cycle of Intentional Teaching" is comprised of planning experiences to support children's development, gathering information about how they are progressing, and adjusting what is being done to support them based upon this information.

The Cycle of Intentional Teaching



All adults who support young children are “teachers”, although their planning, observation and assessment may involve differing levels of detail. Teachers in a classroom environment might develop detailed learning experience plans and use formal assessment tools. A family is also engaging in the “Cycle of Intentional Teaching” when they take their child to the playground to develop gross motor skills, observe that she cannot yet climb the stairs to the slide, and then help her learn this skill. By being intentional, adults can make sure that they are supporting children in meaningful ways.

Assessment

An assessment tool aligned to the ELDS should be used to determine how children are progressing across these domains of development. Two types of tools, with different purposes, are appropriate for use in conjunction with the ELDS:

Developmental Screenings are tools designed to be brief surveys of children’s abilities and are used to determine if further assessment is necessary. (Note: The Ages and Stages Child Monitoring Program offers a developmental screening process that can be accessed by calling the Child Development Infoline at 1-800-505-7000.)

Formative Assessments are tools designed to determine how children are progressing in their development of certain abilities so that further support can be planned (e.g. curriculum, instruction, family activities, and adult support).

The ELDS are not a screening or assessment tool.

Communication

Communication between all of the adults supporting children is critical. The ELDS provide a common language to communicate about children’s skills and progress and to plan supports. The Domain Information pages include general information about each area of development and evidence-based strategies to support infants and toddlers and preschoolers. The more detailed strands and learning progressions for each domain will support more in-depth discussion and planning.

By using these ELDS as a part of a thoughtful process, families and early care and education professionals can work together to ensure that children are eager and ready to learn and grow.

Fostering Competent Learners: Essential Dispositions

Across all ages and domains, early learning experiences will support children to:



in new and unusual ways. Those supporting young children's growth and development should create safe environments in which children can explore and experiment.

■ **Be flexible**

Foster children's ability to adapt to new situations, to be flexible in their responses and to actively engage in new environments. Exposure to new ideas, environments, and situations in meaningful ways can promote resilience.

■ **Be critical thinkers**

Encourage children to use critical thinking skills to help them organize and use the great amount of information available today. Those supporting young children's growth and development should promote an understanding of the concepts behind specific skills (e.g. understanding quantity as well as learning the sequence of counting); provide opportunities to engage in higher order thinking skills and encourage children to question the accuracy of information they receive.

■ **Be purposeful and reflective**

Promote children's engagement in purposeful action. Very young children should be actively involved in play and will benefit from reminders of the results of their actions. Three- and four-year olds should play an active role in planning experiences, setting goals, and celebrating accomplishments. They should be encouraged to be reflective and to learn from mistakes.

■ **Be social learners**

Social interactions form the basis for children's learning. Encourage children to interact with adults and peers, ask questions, and to jointly solve problems. Those supporting young children's growth and development should provide opportunities to learn through cooperative experiences with adults and children.

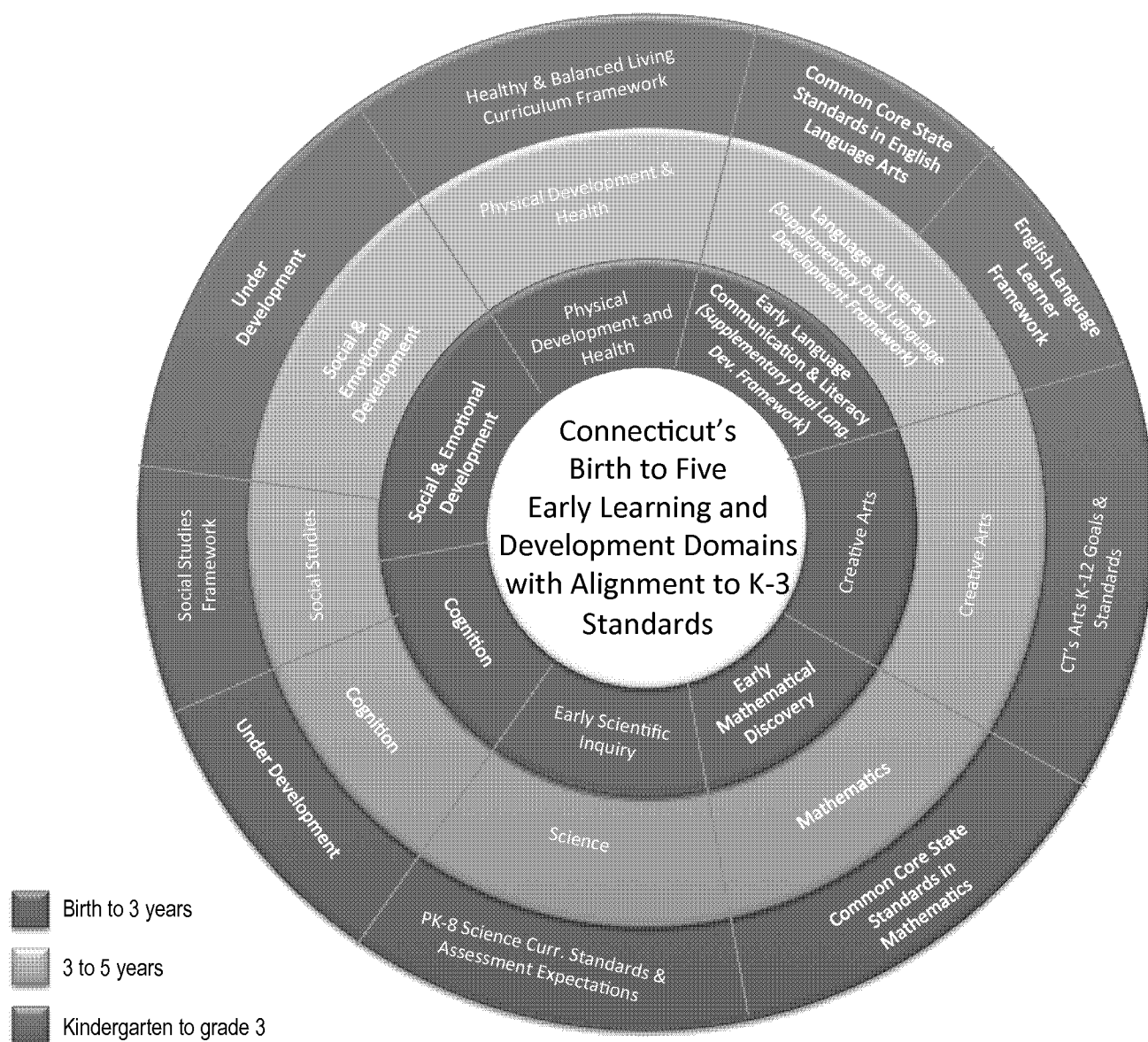
■ **Be creative**

Support young children's growth and development by encouraging creative thinking and novel approaches to solving problems. Children should have opportunities to create, express themselves in a variety of ways, and approach problems from new perspectives. The focus of early learning experiences should be on the process instead of the product, promoting learning, exploring and thinking over achieving a specific result or answer.

■ **Be inquisitive**

Encourage children to explore, seek new information and ask questions. Children should feel comfortable questioning information, testing out new ideas and simply playing with materials

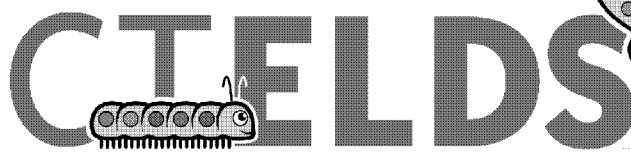
Domain Wheel



*The supplemental Dual Language Development Framework applies to children learning multiple languages. Early learning environments must respect family language preference and honor children's development in their primary language and promote continued bi-lingual development.

Domain Information Pages and Standards

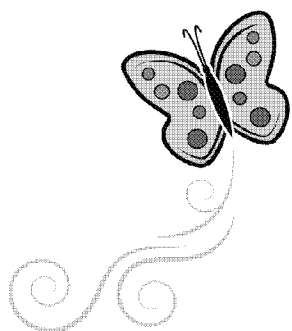




Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

Social and Emotional Development

Understanding yourself, your feelings, and how to play
with other people.



What adults can do...

Encourage
Caring
Affection
Relationships
Problem solving
Safety

Infants and toddlers

Spend time holding, talking and playing with your baby. Caring contact builds a strong relationship.

Comfort your baby when he cries. This helps your baby feel secure and learn how to calm down.

Talk about your baby's actions, feelings and body. This will help your baby learn about themselves.

Have family routines. Routines help babies feel safe.

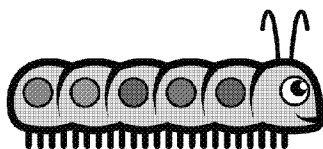
Preschoolers

Let your child do some things on their own. Support them to do new things and solve problems.

Talk to your child about feelings. Help them find ways to calm themselves.

Help you child understand routines. Be sure to say goodbye when you leave your child.

Make time to play with other children. Go to the park, have playdates or join a playgroup.



Social and Emotional Development						
Learning Progression	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years
	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop trusting healthy attachments and relationships with primary caregiver.						
Trusting Relationships	SE.6.1 Attend and respond to familiar adults and is able to be soothed when distressed	SE.12.1 Prefer primary caregiver to others and usually accept guidance from trusted adults	SE.18.1 Look to trusted caregivers for cues about how to respond to their environment, comfort and support	SE.24.1 Use familiar adults as secure base through behaviors such as glancing back at caregiver while playing	SE.36.1 Approach caregivers for support and comfort particularly during stressful or frustrating situations	SE.48.1 Engage in interactions with less familiar adults
Managing Separation	SE.6.2 Show recognition of familiar faces and awareness if someone is a stranger	SE.12.2 Display preference for trusted adults which may include exhibiting fear and protesting at separation	SE.18.2 Display attachment to trusted adults and feelings of security which may include a fear of strangers and new and unfamiliar places	SE.24.2 Manage routine separations from caregivers with little distress and quickly calms after a separation such that he/she can move through activities	SE.36.2 Manage most separations without distress and adjust to new setting with support from a trusted adult	SE.48.2 Manage most separations without distress and adjust to new settings in the presence of trusted adult
						SE.60.1 Seek help and approval from a wider array of adults in trusted roles
						SE.60.2 Through expanding relationships with adults (e.g., teacher, play group leader, friends' caregivers), exhibit comfort in exploring more new settings, although they may need to periodically check-in with a familiar adult
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop self-regulation.						
Regulation of Emotions and Behavior	SE.6.3 In addition to being comforted by familiar adult, can also get comfort from sucking thumb, fist, or pacifier	SE.12.3 Have ways to comfort self, which may involve items such as a stuffed animal or a special blanket that help them feel safe and secure	SE.18.3 Show increasing regulation through daily routines, activities and familiar adults	SE.24.3 With adult assistance, find comfort in rituals and routines, use special comfort object to self-soothe (especially at nap time)	SE.36.3 With adult support, use self-soothing techniques to calm	SE.48.3 Use strategies to self-soothe with limited adult support
						SE.60.3 Use strategies to self-soothe across situations with minimal prompting and shares strategies with peers or family
						SE.60.4 Demonstrate increased ability to consider to the social standards of the environment when responding to their emotional state

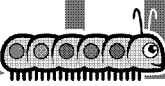
	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Regulation of Impulses and Behavior	SE 6.4 Respond to having needs met (e.g. is comforted by being picked up or feed)	SE 12.4 Respond to adult interactions including tone of voice, expression and gestures (e.g., shaking head and frowning)	SE 18.4 Respond to adult guidance to accept an alternative to initial desire or impulse (e.g., a truck from the shelf vs. one another child has, food choices)	SE 24.4 Accept some redirection from adults	SE 36.4 Begin to control behavior by responding to choice and limits provided by an adult	SE 48.4 With adult guidance and support, wait for short period of time to get something wanted (e.g., waiting for turn with a toy or waiting for next step in daily routine)	SE 60.5 Tolerate small levels of frustration and disappointment, displaying appropriate behavior with adult prompting and support
		SE 12.5 Show anticipation and respond to familiar routines in their lives	SE 18.5 Within the context of a responsive adult relationship, will begin to tolerate a brief wait for needs to be met				
			SE 18.6 Show anticipation of next step in daily routine (e.g., reaches or signs for bib when placed in high chair)	SE 24.5 Is aware of typical routine and show some understanding of rules, but may need adult support	SE 36.5 Make transitions and follow basic routines and rules with adult supervision	SE 48.5 Make transitions and follow basic schedule, routines and rules with occasional reminders	SE 60.7 Recall and follow daily routines with little support, including adapting to changes in rules and routines
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop, express, recognize and respond to emotions.							
Emotional Expression	SE 6.5 Display varied responses (e.g., will smile or kick when a caregiver interacts with them. may stiffen when something displeases them, or may turn away from something they dislike)	SE 12.6 Express basic emotions (e.g., sadness, frustration, anger) through facial expressions, movements, crying smiling, laughing	SE 18.7 Express emotions through physical means such as hugging, throwing. May be cooperative or uncooperative and look to adult for reaction	SE 24.6 Express more complex emotions (e.g., excitement, embarrassment, pride, sadness) and begin to communicate their feelings (although this remains an emerging skill which is only partially effective)	SE 36.6 Begin to communicate about feelings, including the cause and reaction to these feelings (e.g., "I miss my mommy. I sad", "He mad you took his toy.", "I sad so Papa hug me")	SE 48.6 Express emotions experienced in typical daily routines (e.g., frustration at waiting, excitement about a favored activity, pride) through language and gesturing rather than physical ways	SE 60.8 Describe emotions and feelings to trusted adults and peers

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Recognition and Response to Emotions in Others	SE.6.6 React to different emotions of familiar adults (e.g., smile and coo at smiling faces, turn away from sad face)	SE.12.7 Notice and react to feelings of others. (e.g., may frown when another baby is crying or be upset if hears yelling)	SE.18.8 Recognize basic feelings in self and others SE.18.9 Begin to respond to others' feelings and show interest in them. Show awareness of when an adult is pleased or upset with behavior	SE.24.7 Recognize and respond to basic feelings in others (e.g., gives item to peer who is upset)	SE.36.7 Label a variety of emotions in pictures and others' expressions SE.36.8 Show awareness of appropriate responses to the emotional state of others (e.g., may occasionally comfort someone who is upset or may nurture a doll during dramatic play)	SE.48.7 Recognize, label and respond to a wide variety of emotions in others	SE.60.9 Recognize and show acknowledgement of the feeling, needs and rights of others through behavior (e.g., say "thank you", shares with others, notice issues of fairness) SE.60.10 Begin to understand that different people may have different emotional reactions
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop self-awareness, self-concept and competence.							
Sense of self	SE.6.7 React when hearing their own name through movement or expressions	SE.12.8 Consistently respond to their name	SE.18.9 Demonstrates self-awareness through response to name and use of "me" and "mine"	SE.24.8 Identify own family members by relationship and/or name	SE.36.9 Identify self, family members, teacher and some peers by name	SE.48.9 Refer to themselves by first and last name and identify some characteristics (e.g., gender, hair color, etc.) and skills	SE.60.11 Identify themselves as an individual and a part of a group by sharing individual characteristics and roles within the group (e.g., name family members and roles, name team members or classmates)
	SE.6.8 Begin to realize their hands and feet belong to them and explore them as well as face, eyes and mouth	SE.12.9 Show awareness of body parts of self and others	SE.18.10 Recognize self in mirror				
Personal Preferences	SE.6.9 Express preferences for familiar people and some objects. (e.g., stop crying more quickly with a familiar person; move their legs, arms, and smile at a familiar person)	SE.12.10 Develop preferences for food objects, textures. May reject non-preferred items (e.g., pushing them away)	SE.18.11 Begin to communicate own likes and dislikes	SE.24.9 Use words and/or gestures to express interests (e.g., points and says, "look, airplane")	SE.36.10 May want to keep what belongs to them close by and often will not want to share	SE.48.10 Recognize and describe themselves in terms of basic preferences	SE.60.12 Describe self by referring to preferences, thoughts and feelings

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Self-Concept and competency		SE.12.11 Demonstrate anticipation of results from own actions (e.g., drops toy so adult will pick it up, repeats action that makes loud noise)	SE.18.12 Show confidence when supported to complete familiar tasks and will attempt new tasks with adult support	SE.24.10 Complete simple familiar tasks with confidence (e.g., puts on article of clothing); engage in new experiences with support from a familiar adult	SE.36.11 Regularly engage in familiar Begin to show independence by frequently attempting to do thing on their own even when tasks are difficult for them	SE.48.11 Demonstrate confidence in a range of activities, routines, and tasks and take initiative in attempting unfamiliar tasks	SE.60.13 Demonstrate increased confidence in attempting new tasks and making decisions regarding activities and materials
		SE.12.12 Respond to own actions with pleasure (e.g., coos, laughs)	SE.18.13 React positively (e.g., smiles, claps) to accomplishments		SE.36.12 Express feeling of pleasure over accomplishment and share this with others (e.g., "Look what I made")		SE.60.14 Show pride in accomplishments and abilities
		Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop social relationships.					
Adult Relationships (see note below)	SE.6.10 Respond differently to different people. Respond to familiar people by smiling, cooing, and moving their body	SE.12.13 Engage in social interactions not connected to getting physical needs met (e.g., peek-a-boo, performing, copying others, and babbling)	SE.18.14 Show affection or shared attention (e.g., pointing out something of interest) to an increasing number of familiar people	SE.24.11 Enjoy games and other social exchanges with familiar adults. May seek out repeated patterns of interaction	SE.36.13 Enjoy sharing new experiences with familiar adults	SE.48.12 Communicate with familiar adults and accept or request guidance	SE.60.15 Typically use socially appropriate behavior with adults, such as helping, responding to limits, etc.
	SE.6.11 Show interest in interacting with others. May gain an adult's attention and wait for a response	SE.12.14 Notice the activity of adults and other children and attend closely					

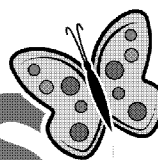
Note: Caregivers guide children during interactions with them, as well as other adults. Therefore, these markers of social relationships with adults are highly dependent upon child temperament, the adult temperament, and the adult's guidance and regulation of the interplay.

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Play/ Friendship	SE.6.12 Notice other children and may touch, smile or coo to them	SE.12.15 Watch actions of other children but does not join into the play. May stay in proximity, make eye contact and babble	SE.18.15 Show interest in children who are playing nearby and may interact with them briefly	SE.24.12 Show interest in the what other children are doing and play alongside them with similar materials	SE.36.14 Seek out other children and will interact with other children using common materials SE.36.15 Show preference for certain peers over time although these preferences may shift	SE.48.13 Interact with one or more children (including small groups) beginning to work together to build or complete a project	SE.60.16 Cooperates with peers through sharing and taking turns SE.60.17 Increasingly invested in the responses and friendship of peers and modify behavior to enhance peer relationships SE.60.18 Seek help from peers and offers assistance when it is appropriate
						SE.48.14 Interact with a variety of children in the program	SE.60.19 Engage in developing solutions and work to resolve conflict with peers
Conflict resolution							



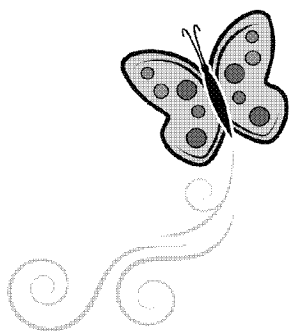
CTELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards



Physical Health and Development

Learning to take care of yourself and to do things with your body and hands so that you grow strong and healthy



What adults can do...

Encourage

- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Helping with self-care

Infants and toddlers

Lay your baby on their tummy while they are awake. “Tummy time” helps build strong muscles.

Talk while you take care of them. Have them be a part of healthy routines such as washing up, eating, and dressing.

Encourage exploring objects with their hands. Give them small, but safe, items to use with their hands.

Make sure they are healthy. Children who get enough rest and healthy food learn better.

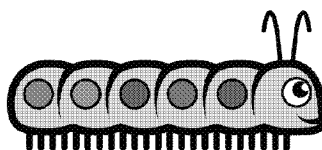
Preschoolers

Find a time and place for your child to run and play. Running, jumping and climbing help build strong muscles and bones.

Have your child take part in self-care. Talk to them about why being clean is important, show them how to use buttons and zippers, etc.

Offer your child healthy food choices. Talk about healthy food and eating a variety of good things.

Make sure they get enough rest. Preschoolers need 11-13 hours of sleep each day to stay healthy and learn.




Physical Development and Health							
Learning Progression	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop gross motor skills.							
Mobility *Children may use adaptive equipment or an assistive device to achieve independence on these indicators	PH.6.1 Show head control when in any position and during transitional movement	PH.12.1 Get into sitting position on own and play while in this position	PH.18.1 Use walking as main means of mobility and pull toy when walking	PH.24.1 Walk with legs closer together and able to change directions smoothly and carry objects	PH.36.1 Walk and run on various surfaces and level changes with balance and control of speed	PH.48.1 Walk up and down stairs alternating feet while carrying an object	PH.60.1 Alternate direction while running and stop easily without losing balance
	PH.6.2 Roll over, usually from both directions	PH.12.2 Move when on the floor by rolling, creeping, crawling with purpose	PH.18.2 Stand from a squat position using arms to push off floor	PH.24.2 Begin to run	PH.36.2 Walk up and down stairs alternating feet on steps with railing held		
	PH.6.3 Reach, grasp and bat for objects overhead and eventually reach and play with feet when on back						
	PH.6.4 Push up and support weight on forearms when on stomach	PH.12.3 Pull to stand, cruise along furniture, and stand alone; may take a few steps independently or with help	PH.18.3 Creep up and down stairs	PH.24.3 Walk up and down steps holding onto rail, often leading with the same foot and negotiating one step at a time			
	PH.6.5 Sit with support						

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Large Muscle Movement and Coordination			PH.18.4 Throw ball in forward direction	PH.24.4 Use more complicated series of movements such as climbing onto and down from furniture without help, propelling self on ride-on toys	PH.36.3 Catch and throw a playground ball with an adult short distance away PH.36.4 Jump with two feet	PH.48.2 Combine several gross motor skills in an organized way, such as moving through an obstacle course or participating in a creative movement activity following directives PH.48.3 Hop on one foot	PH.60.2 Coordinate more complex movements with increasing control, balance, and accuracy (e.g., climbing on playground equipment, pumping a swing, hopscotch, riding tricycle)
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop fine motor skills.							
Visual Motor Integration	PH.6.6 Locate an object using vision or sound, reach and grasp the object	PH.12.4 Reach into containers or reaches to activate a simple cause and effect toy	PH.18.5 Engage in play that requires using vision and hands such as build a tower or structure, with several blocks balanced on top of each other or placing a large peg in the a pegboard base	PH.24.6 Orient pieces to match opening and complete a simple inset form board/puzzle or shape sorter	PH.36.6 Use common tools that require eye-hand coordination with precision and for their intended purpose (e.g., hammer peg, twist handle to open latch, put body parts on Mr. Potato)	PH.48.6 Use smaller objects with precisions (e.g., put small pegs in light board, use large needle to sew, use scissors to cut on curved line, etc.)	PH.60.3 Use coordinated movements to manipulate materials, including cutting and drawing with control and using appropriate hand position to manipulate objects (e.g., thumb up position while using scissors)
	PH.6.7 Follow an object with eyes across body, crossing the middle	PH.12.5 Combine and separate toys (e.g., replace and remove large rings from post in any order)					Connecticut

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Small Muscle Movement and Coordination	PH.6.8 Use voluntary and purposeful movements to bring hands to mouth.	PH.12.6 Move objects from one hand to another and combine items at center of body (e.g., banging two blocks together)	PH.18.6 Use both hands at the same time for different purposes (e.g., may stabilize tower with one hand and add an additional block with other hand)	PH.24.7 Use a writing tool to scribble purposefully and imitate vertical and horizontal stroke; may use a fistful grasp	PH.36.7 Use writing tools or paint objects with some control and purpose	PH.48.7 Use writing/drawing tools with increased precision to draw simple shapes, pictures and/or letter. May have immature pencil grasp with 3-5 fingers on pencil shaft	PH.60.4 Have sufficient control of writing implements to copy simple forms or geometric shapes and write some letters (e.g., may write own name since these are most familiar)
	PH.6.9 Bring hands together while lying on back	PH.12.7 Use index finger to poke and grasp small objects between thumb and fingertips					PH.60.5 Use a mature pencil grasp with 3 fingers on writing implement
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to acquire adaptive skills.							
Note: Consideration of cultural beliefs and preferences across these developmental progressions is critical.							
Feeding Routines/ Nutrition	PH.6.10 Participate in feeding routines with consistent caregivers by holding onto bottle, and/ or leaning forward in anticipation of food offered via bottle, breast, or spoon	PH.12.8 Participate in feeding routines by, holding cups or bottles, using fingers for self-feeding, and/ or using eating utensils	PH.18.7 Demonstrate increased proficiency using eating utensils and cups. May begin to serve self some food, but spills are common	PH.24.8 Begin to serve self food (dishing out helpings and pouring liquids) with adult assistance	PH.36.8 Feed self with minimal spilling.	PH.48.8 Pour liquid from a small pitcher	PH.60.6 Use butter knife to spread and cut. Open most containers to remove food
Safety and Responsibility			PH.18.8 Typically respond to adult requests to stop unsafe behavior	PH.24.9 Show awareness of items that are unsafe and point them out to familiar adults (e.g., point out open gate above stairs, show them a knife that is left on counter)	PH.36.9 Tell several basic safety rules at home and in familiar settings (e.g., school, library, and playground). Bring other children's rule-breaking to the attention of adults	PH.48.9 Understand basic safety rules at home and in familiar settings (e.g., school, library, and playground). Generally follow rules and bring other children's rule-breaking to the attention of adults	PH.60.7 Understand the reason for most basic safety rules at home, in familiar settings, and in the community

Connecticut

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Dressing and Hygiene		PH.12.9 Participate in dressing, undressing, and bathing by holding arms out, taking off socks, etc.	PH.18.9 Show interest in doing things for him/herself including dressing. Put arm in sleeve, step out of pants, attempt to put on socks or shoes	PH.24.10 Engage in dressing and hygiene routines with increasing intention: pull pants up and down, take off jacket, dry own hands	PH.36.10 Attempt to complete basic self-care routines (e.g., dressing, undressing, toileting, and washing) although may still need caregiver assistance	PH.48.10 Manage most aspects of dressing, toileting, hand washing, and tooth brushing independently with minimal caregiver reminders to guide and support	PH.60.8 Typically manage own dressing, toileting, and basic hygiene
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to maintain physical health status and well-being.							
Note: Consideration of cultural beliefs and preferences across these developmental progressions is critical.							
Physical Health Status	Children's physical health status impacts learning and development in all areas. Children who possess good overall health (including oral, visual, and auditory) with any appropriate supports (such as glasses, hearing aids, or alternative communication systems) have a solid foundation to help them grow and learn. Maintaining good overall health status involves regular screenings, a lack of illness or preventable diseases, age appropriate amounts of sleep and rest, and healthy growth patterns (e.g., height and weight).						
Physical Activity	PH.6.11 Interact with caregiver in daily physical activities that involve varying positions and promote development of movement skills	PH.12.10 Interact with caregivers in daily physical activities that involve exploration and movement	PH.18.10 Interact with caregivers in a variety of physical activity experiences	PH.24.11 Engage in physical activity in both indoor and outdoor environments that require use of large muscles	PH.36.11 Demonstrate increasing strength and endurance sufficient to actively engage in a total of 60 minutes of physical activity spread over the course of a day	PH.48.11 Demonstrate increasing strength and endurance sufficient to actively engage in 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity spread over the course of a day	PH.60.9 Demonstrate increasing strength and endurance sufficient to actively engage in 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity spread over the course of a day
Healthy Behaviors	Children participate in self-care routines, hygiene and nutrition with assistance and prompting from caregivers. These skills are addressed in the following strands: • Dressing and Hygiene • Feeding Routines/Nutrition				PH.36.12 Discuss healthy practices including hygiene, nutrition and sleep	PH.48.12 Name examples of healthy practice including hygiene, nutrition and sleep	PH.60.10 Identify healthy practices including hygiene, nutrition and sleep

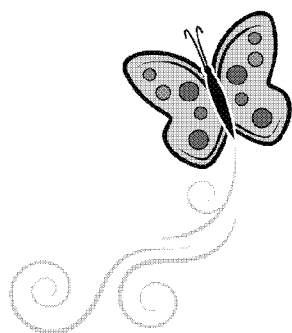


CtELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

Language and Literacy

Communicating using your body, language, signs, and
written communication



What adults can do...

Encourage

- Interacting with people
- Gesturing, making noise and talking
- Enjoying books, songs, and writing
- Expressing ideas, needs, and feelings
- Writing

Infants and toddlers

Share books everyday. Read stories at bedtime or when riding on the bus.

Talk and sing with your baby.
Encourage them to “sing” and “talk” too.

Respond to your babies noises.
Repeat the noises they make or comment, “You sound happy.”

Help them learn new words by naming and describing what you see. “I see a shiny, silver mirror.”

Read books to your child EVERYDAY!

Preschoolers

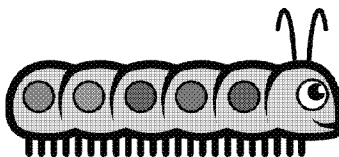
Show interest in what your child is saying. Look at them when they talk and comment on what they’re saying.

Ask questions that make them think.
When reading a story ask, “What do you think will happen next?”

Talk to your child about what happens during the day. Talk about what you do together and ask about what happens when you are apart.

Let them practice “writing”. Ask them to draw a picture or make a list, even if they use shapes instead of letters

Read books to your child EVERYDAY!



28 The language, communication, and literacy learning progressions included here are intended to represent common development of language skills in a child's primary language or modes of communication. Children who are learning multiple languages or children who are learning to communicate in modes of communication different from that of their primary caregiver may demonstrate individual variation in their progress toward these language and literacy goals. Those supporting children who are learning multiple languages may also want to refer to the supplemental Dual Language Learner Framework to be used in conjunction with considering a child's progress in their primary language or mode of communication through the use of this domain.

Learning Progression		Early Language, Communication, and Literacy					Language and Literacy	
	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years	
	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to understand language (receptive language).								
Word Comprehension	L.6.1 Respond to facial expressions or voices by changing own facial expression, crying, or altering movements	L.12.1 Understand that words, gestures, and/or signs represent objects, people, or experiences	L.18.1 Understand that words, gestures, or signs stand for people, objects, or experiences that are not present	L.24.1 Demonstrate in a variety of ways understanding of most of what is communicated through gestures, signs, or oral language L.24.2 Point to familiar objects, people, and body parts	L.36.1 Demonstrate an understanding of an increased vocabulary, influenced by experiences and relationships	L.48.1 Understand words or signs for objects, actions, and visible attributes found frequently in both real and symbolic contexts	L.60.1 Understand an increasing variety and specificity of words for objects, actions, and attributes encountered in both real and symbolic contexts	
	L.6.2 Orient to the direction of sound or visual cues L.6.3 React when hearing own name or to positive facial expression	L.12.2 Can carry out simple requests (e.g., "wave bye-bye")	L.18.2 Remember language heard repeatedly in stories, poems, and interactive language experiences	L.24.3 Respond to questions and follow simple directions	L.36.2 Follow two-step directions	L.48.2 Understand increasingly complex sentences that include 2 - 3 concepts (e.g., "Put the blue paper under the box.")	L.60.2 Understand increasingly complex sentences that include 3-4 concepts (e.g., "Plants are living things that will not survive without soil, sunlight, and water.")	
Language Comprehension								


	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to use language (expressive language).							
Vocabulary	L.6.4 Use a variety of facial expressions and sounds (e.g., cooing, babbling, and varied cries) to communicate	L.12.3 Begin to use word approximations (e.g., "ma-ma" or "da-da") or conventional gestures (e.g., waving, signing "more")	L.18.3 Begin to use words or conventional gestures to communicate	L.24.4 Name familiar objects and actions; use commands (e.g., "no"), possessives (e.g., "mine") or reactions (e.g., "ow")	L.36.3 Use nouns and verbs to label experiences, actions, or events L.36.4 Use some personal pronouns when referring to others (e.g., "you", "he", "she")	L.48.3 Use accepted words for objects, actions, and attributes encountered frequently in both real and symbolic contexts L.48.4 Use simple pronouns (e.g., I, me, you, mine, he, she)	L.60.3 Use an increasing variety and specificity of accepted words for objects, actions, and attributes encountered in both real and symbolic contexts
			L.18.4 Has a 20+ word vocabulary	L.24.5 Use new words frequently to talk about familiar things or activities	L.36.5 May occasionally use more sophisticated words than they typically use in conversational speech but that have been learned through books and personal experiences (e.g., <i>large, fast, angry, car, run</i>)	L.48.5 Begin to use some words that are not a part of everyday conversational speech but that are learned through books and personal experiences (e.g., <i>gigantic, rapidly, frustrated, transportation, race or jog</i>)	L.60.4 Use more complex words learned through books and personal experiences (e.g., label favorite shirt as <i>charreuse</i> , or know that a <i>paleontologist</i> studies dinosaurs)
Expression of Ideas, Feelings and Needs	L.6.5 "Talk" to self and others using various vocalizations	L.12.4 Communicate wants and needs through a combination of crying, babbling, and occasional word approximations, and/or gestures	L.18.5 Respond to questions with sounds, sometimes including words and oftentimes gestures	L.24.6 Use words to request objects, have needs met, or gain attention	L.36.6 Use inflection in phrases or sentences to ask a question L.36.7 Comment on a variety of experiences, interactions, or observations	L.48.6 Communicate about current or removed events and/or objects L.48.7 Use increasingly longer, complex sentences that combine phrases or concepts to communicate ideas	L.60.5 Use more complex words to describe the relationships between objects and ideas (e.g., position words such as under or beside and comparative words such as bigger or longer)

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Language Structure			L.18.6 Increasingly use gestures and sounds in coordination to communicate	L.24.7 Combine words and speaks in short, two-word phrases such as "me up!" L.36.9 Use speech that is mostly intelligible to familiar adults	L.36.8 Use basic grammar rules including pronouns, plurals, possessives, and regular past tense Note: Variations in applying grammar rules may be due to dual language learning and/or alternative grammar usage by their family	L.48.8 Use basic grammar rules including irregular past tense and questions Note: Variations in applying grammar rules may be due to dual language learning and/or alternative grammar usage by their family	L.60.6 Use basic grammar rules including subject-verb agreement, tenses, regular and irregular past tense, irregular plurals Note: Variations in applying grammar rules may be due to dual language learning and/or alternative grammar usage by their family
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to use language for social interaction.							
Conventions of Conversation	L.6.6 Show interest in back and forth pretend games	L.12.5 Begin to understand that a conversation is about taking turns	L.18.7 Pay attention to a speaker by pausing physical activity, shifting gaze, or looking towards speaker	L.24.8 Take turns in conversations by initiating and sustaining a simple conversation over two turns	L.36.10 Have conversations with adults and peers that include four or more exchanges	L.48.10 Maintain a topic of conversation over the course of several turns	L.60.8 Initiate, maintain, and end conversations by repeating what other person says and/or by asking questions
			L.18.8 Repeat or try another mode of communicating desire if initial attempts are unsuccessful				

Language for Interaction	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
	L.6.7 Coo, gurgle, smile in response to stimulation and to initiate social contact	L.12.6 Enjoy opportunities to “converse” with adults in a more sustained fashion, including playing simple imitation games	L.18.9 Use gestures and/or sounds to interact (e.g., waves, shakes head no, reaches to be lifted up)	L.24.9 Answer a basic question with a word	L.36.11 Converse with adults and peers about common experiences or events	L.48.11 Answer simple who, what, where, and why questions	L.60.9 Use language to share idea and gain information
	L.6.8 Express pleasure as adults imitate the faces and sounds they make	L.12.7 Intentionally use gestures and/or vocalizations to regulate the behavior of others and engage in social interaction		L.24.10 Use language to express wants, needs, likes, and dislikes to others			
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to gain book appreciation and knowledge.							
Interest and Engagement with Books	L.6.9 Respond to music, stories, and pictures shared with an adult	L.12.8 Engage with adults, showing shared attention to a book	L.18.10 Point to preferred pictures in books or texts L.24.12 Chime in on nursery rhymes or repeat words or phrases from familiar stories	L.24.11 Point to named pictures; may name or comment on familiar pictures L.36.13 Recite familiar phrases of songs, books, and rhymes; may chime in with rhyme in familiar text or song	L.36.12 Sustain attention for short periods of time while being told a story or read a favorite picture book	L.48.12 Select fiction and non-fiction books to be read and attend with interest	L.60.10 Independently choose to ‘read’ books and select a variety of texts, including fiction and nonfiction

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Understanding of Stories or Information Stories or information may be shared through oral storytelling, sharing of pictures and/or books				L.24.13 Answer simple specific questions about familiar stories (e.g., "What does the cat say?") Ask basic questions about pictures (e.g., "Who that?")	L.36.14 Enjoy telling and retelling stories and information	L.48.13 Demonstrate comprehension through retelling with use of pictures and props, acting out main events, or sharing information learned from nonfiction text L.48.14 Ask and answer simple who, what, where, and why questions related to story or text	L.60.11 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including story elements (e.g., setting, characters, events) and/or shares key details from informational text L.60.12 Ask and answer who, what, where, and why questions related to story or text L.60.13 Use connections between self and character, experience, and emotions to increase comprehension
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to gain knowledge of print and its uses.							
Book Concepts				L.24.14 Hold book upright	L.36.15 Turn pages of a book	L.48.15 Look at pages of a book from left to right (or according to conventions of home language) L.48.16 Recognize that print represents spoken words (e.g., first name in print, environmental labels)	L.60.14 Know how print is read (e.g., left to right, top to bottom, front to back or according to convention of home language) L.60.15 Know that books have titles, authors, illustrators, or photographers L.60.16 Recognize words as a unit of print and that letters are grouped to form words L.60.17 Identify some familiar printed words out of context L.60.18 Begin to use awareness of letter sounds along with pictures to read words in text
Print Concepts					L.36.16 Recognize some familiar signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., logos, signs for familiar store)	L.48.17 Identify some printed words and/or common symbols (e.g., bathroom signs) in the context of the environment	

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Letter Recognition						L.48.18 Recognize some letters especially those in one's own name	L.60.19 Recognize and name known letters of the alphabet in familiar and unfamiliar words L.60.20 Make some letter-sound connections
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop phonological awareness.							
Phonological Awareness					L.36.17 Recognize environmental sounds (e.g., animal or vehicle sounds such as "Baa-baa" or "Beep-beep")	L.48.19 Recognize rhyming words in songs, chants, or poems L.48.20 Identify when initial sounds in words are the same L. 48.21 Distinguish individual words in a sentence	L.60.21 Produce rhyming words or words that have same initial sound L.60.22 Recognize which words in a set of words begin with the same sound L.60.23 Distinguish syllables in words
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to convey meaning through drawing, letters and words.							
Drawing and Writing			L.18.11 Use writing tools to make scribbles	L.24.15 Use writing tools to make scribbles	L.36.18 Draw simple shapes to represent ideas and write message using controlled linear scribble	L.48.22 Draw or "write" to convey an idea, event, or story. "Writing" involves scribbles, letters, and/or letter-like shapes (e.g., make pretend list, or use their words to dictate a message to communicate with others)	L.60.24 Draw original stories with a beginning, middle, and end L.60.25 Use early developmental spelling; may use one letter for the initial or final sound to represent whole word

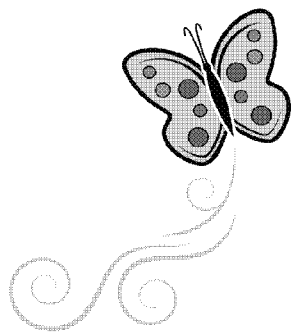


CtELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

Creative Arts

Enjoying music, dance, and art and expressing yourself
in these ways.



What adults can do...

Encourage

- Listening to and making music
- Describing art and music
- Being creative

Infants and toddlers

Play music for your child. Describe the music and how it makes you feel.

Sing to your child. Move to the music while you're singing.

Show your child pictures. Talk about the picture, What's in it, colors, shapes...

Encourage your child to create. Give them art supplies that are safe for their age.

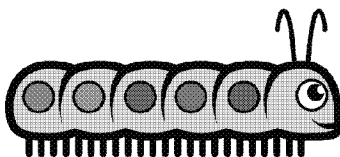
Preschoolers

Display your child's art work. Talk about what they did to make it.

Give your child space to move to music. Play music with different beats and styles.

Encourage your child to be creative. Don't worry about what the project looks like.

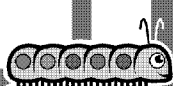
Expose them to the arts. Watch dancing, look at paintings, listen to music, read books about art, theater and music.



Creative Arts							
Learning Progression	0-6 months	6-12 months	12- 18 Months	18-24 Months	24 to 36 Months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:	Indicators This is evident, for example, when children:
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to engage in and enjoy the arts.							
Music	CA.6.1 React to music by turning to a sound source, cooing in response, wiggling or moving, soothing one 's self, etc.	CA.12.1 Show interest in singing, moving, and dancing, using their body	CA.18.1 Use instruments to explore rhythm and melody	CA.24.1 React to changes in music by joining in with more extended segments of familiar music using voice, physical gestures and/or instruments	CA.36.1 Show response to qualities of different music with variations in physical movement (e.g., children walk, bounce, slide, rock, sway in response to qualities of rhythm)	CA.48.1 Adapt to changes in the basic qualities of music and move in more organized ways to same/ different qualities of music	CA.60.1 Initiate new musical activities with voices/ instruments (e.g., apply new words, add instruments to familiar song)
		CA.12.2 Move body (e.g., nod head, bounce, wiggle, rock) in response to qualities of music whether melody, volume, or rhythm is same or different (fast/ slow; low/high; calm/ jazzy)	CA.18.2 Respond to music by joining in on one or two words in a song or moving physically (e.g., hand gestures) upon hearing a familiar melody or rhythm	CA.24.2 Initiate words to songs and song gestures (e.g., naming animals in a song or patting, nodding)	CA.36.2 Respond with voice, body and/ or instruments to longer segments/or patterns of music)	CA.48.2 Imitate or spontaneously sing an entire verse of song	CA.60.2 Invent own music (e.g., through humming, singing, creating rhythms, etc.)
						CA.48.3 Initiate new musical activities with voices or instruments (e.g., apply words, initiate their own listening and movement experiences with some adult assistance)	CA.60.3 Play with familiar rhythms and patterns in a novel way (e.g., explore, and initiate pitch (high/ low), rhythm (patterns), and dynamics (loud / soft)
	CA.12.3 Use musical sounds to aid in communication prior to the advent of language (e.g., babbles in a sing-song manner)	CA.18.3 Imitate parts of songs with words and/ or gestures	CA.24.3 Repeat words to songs, and/ or song gestures and/or sounds (pitches)	CA.36.3 Repeat parts of simple songs	CA.48.4 Spontaneously sing songs and/or songs with gestures	CA.60.4 Create music using their voices and/or a variety of instruments and materials	

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12- 18 Months	18-24 Months	24 to 36 Months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Visual Arts	CA.6.2 React to stimulation in the environment. This can include drawing, sculptures, or painting. Response may be slight such as a glance or stopping an activity	CA.12.4 Respond and explore through sensory experiences such as water play, texture books or toys, and jumbo crayons	CA.18.4 Experiment with a variety of media, including painting with a paint brush, finger painting, scribbling, gluing and taping, age appropriate art software	CA.24.4 Use a wide variety of art materials and media (e.g., clay, dough, wet sand) for purposeful sensory exploration CA.24.5 Experiment with strokes and lines using brushes, crayons, markers, etc.	CA.36.4 Create art in a variety of media with some control and own purpose	CA.48.5 Use different materials and techniques to make art creations that reflect thoughts, feelings, experiences, knowledge	CA.60.5 Use a variety of tools and materials to represent ideas through the visual arts
Drama				CA.24.6 Imitate simple aspects of a role using realistic props and sounds	CA.36.5 Engage in simple pretend play activities	CA.48.6 Act out simple scenarios, taking on a familiar role for brief periods during dramatic play	CA.60.6 Assume elaborate roles in dramatic play situations (e.g., may play multiple roles or may stay in character for extended periods of time) CA.60.7 Use materials and props in unique ways and are creative in finding and using materials as props desired for dramatic play
Dance		CA.12.5 Respond to music with full body movements	CA.18.5 Show increasing body awareness through gross motor movement (e.g., walking, bouncing, swaying, rocking, climbing) and bilateral movement (patting), show directional awareness in movements, and use non-locomotor movements (simple finger plays)	CA.24.7 Demonstrate developing ability to balance, awareness of body (e.g., name body parts, move distinct body parts) CA.24.8 Move creatively while listening to music (e.g., stamp feet, wave arms, sway).	CA.36.6 Demonstrate directional and spatial awareness involving time (fast/slow), space (high, middle, low), or energy (hard/soft) (e.g., moving like a turtle, jumping like a frog, floating like a feather, etc.)	CA.48.7 Demonstrate increasingly complex dance concepts while learning to move their body in place and through space (e.g., jumping from one place to another, combining several movements-hops, turn, stamp feet)	CA.60.8 Use multiple dance concepts as a way to communicate meaning, ideas and feelings (e.g., use movement to represent leaves falling off trees –sway arms, wiggle fingers, stretch, fall to ground)

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12- 18 Months	18-24 Months	24 to 36 Months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to explore and respond to creative works. Appreciation of the Arts					CA.36.7 Describe or ask questions about a work of art	CA.48.8 Respond to the materials, techniques, ideas and emotions of artworks (2-d & 3-D(e.g. explain a picture or sculpture including several details)	CA.60.9 Describe the attributes of various arts media (e.g., used a lot of colors and the paint is thick, sculpture is bumpy)
					CA.36.8 Express interest in and show appreciation for the creative work of others (e.g., through body language, facial expression, or oral language)	CA.48.9 Demonstrate increased appreciation of the work of others and identify preferences	

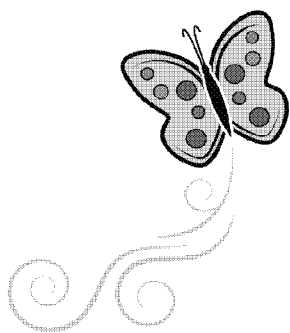


CTELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

Mathematics

Understanding numbers and how to use them,
counting, patterns, measuring and shapes.



What adults can do...

Encourage

- Counting
- Measuring
- Comparing

Infants and toddlers

Use words that describe how much.

Talk about wanting more or having one or two or something.

Talk about shapes. Describe everyday things such as food, toys, or household items, saying thing like, “your plate is a circle”.

Compare sizes. Use words such as big, little, long, and short.

Use math words. Talk about adding one, taking away, dividing something.

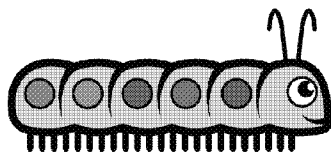
Preschoolers

Count things. Count how many steps it takes to get somewhere, how many pieces of fruit you buy at the store, etc.

Cook together. Let your child help measure and count what goes in the recipe.

Sort and match. Match clothes, sort silverware, play with shape sorters.


Compare size, shape and position. Talk to your child about where things are, measure and compare sizes and talk about the shape of everyday items.



Learning Progression	Early Mathematical Discovery					Mathematics	
	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to understand counting and cardinality.							
Number Names			M.18.1 Say or sign a few number names, but may not necessarily recite them in the correct order	M.24.1 Say or sign a few number names, with beginning evidence of correct sequence (e.g., starts with "one")	M.36.1 Say or sign number sequence up to at least five. Use other number names but not necessarily in the correct order	M.48.1 Say or sign the number sequence up to at least 10	M.60.1 Say and sign the number sequence up to at least 20
Cardinality			M.18.2 Demonstrate one-to-one or one-to-many correspondence (e.g., may fill each compartment in a egg carton with one or several objects)	M.24.2 Put objects in one-to-one correspondence (e.g., puts one item in each compartment)	M.36.2 Count two to three objects using one-to-one correspondence	M.48.2 Count up to at least five objects using one-to-one correspondence, using the number name of the last object counted to represent the total number of objects in a set	M.60.2 Count up to 10 objects using one-to-one correspondence, regardless of configuration, using the number name of the last object counted to represent the total number of objects in a set
Written Numerals						M.48.3 Count out a set of objects up to 4	M.60.3 Count out a set of objects up to 5
						M.48.4 Recognize written numerals up to at least five	M.60.4 Recognize written numerals up to at least 10

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Recognition of Quantity				M.24.3 Name groups of one to two objects	M.36.3 Name and match a small collection of up to three objects	M.48.5 Recognize and name, without counting, the number of objects in small groups of at least 3 or 4 objects	M.60.5 Quickly recognize and name, without counting, the number of objects in collections of up to at least five items
Comparison				M.24.4 Compare collections that are quite different in size	M.36.4 Compare collections of 1-4 similar items verbally or non-verbally	M.48.6 Compare sets of 1-5 objects using a visual matching or counting strategy and describing the comparison as more, less than, or the same	M.60.6 Compare sets of up to 10 objects using a visual matching or counting strategy and describing the comparison as more, less than, or the same
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to understand and describe relationships to solve problems (operations and algebraic thinking.)							
Number Operations					M.36.5 Use some vocabulary related to relative quantity (e.g., "more", "less")	M.48.7 Understand that adding to (or taking away) one or more objects from a group will increase or decrease the objects in the group	<p>M.60.7 Use real-world situations and concrete objects to model and solve addition (e.g., putting together) and subtraction (e.g., taking away) problems up through 5</p> <p>M.60.8 Recognize and describe parts contained in larger numbers by composing number combinations up to at least five (e.g., recognize how many have been secretly taken away from a group of five objects)</p>
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to understand the attributes and relative properties of objects (measurement and data).							
See Attributes, Sorting and Patterns strand in Cognition							
Measurement				M.24.5 Use some vocabulary related to size and quantity (e.g., say something is "big" or request "more")	M.36.6 Have an increasing vocabulary related to number, size and quantity (e.g., use words such as "tall", "long")	M.48.8 Recognize measurable attribute of an object such as length, weight or capacity	<p>M.60.9 Compare the measurable attributes of two or more objects (e.g., length, weight and capacity) and describe the comparison using appropriate vocabulary (e.g., longer, shorter, same length, heavier, lighter, same weight, holds more, holds less, holds the same amount)</p> <p>M.60.10 Begin to use strategies to determine measurable attributes (e.g., length or capacity of objects); may use comparison, standard or non-standard measurement tools</p>

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Data						M.48.9 Sort objects into two groups, counts, and compare the quantity of the groups formed (e.g., indicates which is more)	M.60.11 Represent data using a concrete object or picture graph according to one attribute
Sorting and Classifying			M.18.3 Match objects that are the same	M.24.6 Sort objects using inconsistent strategies (e.g., favorite items, colors)	M.36.7 Sort on the basis of one attribute with adult support	M.48.10 Sort and classify objects by one attribute into two or more groups (e.g., color, size, shape)	M.60.12 Sort and classify a set of objects on the basis of one attribute independently and describe the sorting rule; can re-sort and classify the same set up objects based on a different attribute
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to understand shapes and spatial relationships (geometry and spatial sense).							
Spatial Relationships			M.18.4 Adjust their reach and grasp based upon distance, size and weight of an object	M.24.7 Show beginning understanding of positional vocabulary (e.g., up/down, in/out, on/off, under)	M.36.8 Find objects or locations based upon landmarks and position words (e.g., "Your blanket is on the couch")	M.48.11 Use positional vocabulary (e.g., up/down, in/out, on/off, under) to identify and describe the location of an object	M.60.13 Use relational vocabulary of proximity (e.g., beside, next to, between, above, below, over and under) to identify and describe the location of an object
Identification of Shapes				M.24.8 Match familiar shapes (e.g., circle, square and typical triangle) with same size and orientation	M.36.9 Match familiar shapes with different size and orientation	M.48.12 Identify 2- dimensional shapes (starting with familiar shapes such as circle and triangle) in different orientations and sizes	M.60.14 Identify and describe a variety of 2- dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes with mathematical names (e.g., ball/sphere, box/rectangular prism, can/cylinder) regardless of orientation and size
Composition of Shapes						M.48.13 Combine two or more shapes to create a new shape or to represent an object in the environment	M.60.15 Complete a shape puzzle or a new figure by putting multiple shapes together with purpose

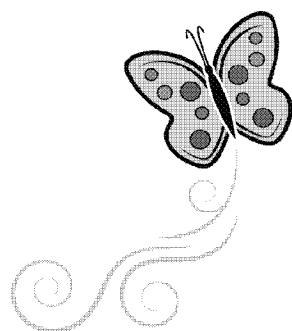


CTELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

Science

Understanding the world around us including living things, the earth and space, and energy.



What adults can do...

Encourage

- Exploring
- Experimenting
- Investigating

Infants and toddlers

Be excited about their discoveries.

Point out the things they figure out, “You saw the bird fly down from the nest to get food for it’s babies! Wasn’t that exciting”.

Answer their questions. Encourage them to ask about things they want to know.

Make sure they have many different kinds of experiences. Find opportunities to explore new places, see nature and investigate.

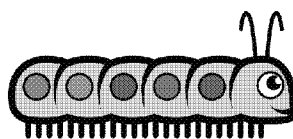
Preschoolers

Give them toys that they can use to explore. Boxes, balls, ramps, bubbles, magnets, containers, magnifying glasses...

Grow things. Plant seeds and talk about what will happen and what the seeds needs to grow.

Go outside. Look at the sky, trees, plants, animals..., collect things and talk about them.


Ask questions. “What do you think will happen next”, “what do you see?”



Learning Progression		Early Scientific Inquiry					Science	
	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24 to 36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years	
	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to apply scientific practices.								
Questioning and Defining Problems	See Curiosity and Initiative learning progression in Cognition	S.24.1 Observe and make comments on things observed through the senses	S.36.1 Ask simple questions related to things observed through the senses ("what" and "why")	S.48.1 Ask more detailed questions including the relationship between two things or cause and affect relationships	S.60.1 Define a problem to be solved, including details and limitations to be considered (e.g., "we need to figure out how to reach that shelf, but we aren't allowed to stand on the chairs)			
Investigating	See Cause and Affect learning progression in Cognition		S.36.2 Manipulate materials and comment on the impact of own actions	S.48.2 Intentionally vary actions in order to observe the effect of these actions on materials	S.60.2 Engage in collaborative investigations to describe phenomena or to explore cause and affect relationships	S.60.3 Gather data by drawing, counting or otherwise documenting observations		
Using evidence	See Personal Preferences learning progression in Social and Emotional Development		S.36.3 Provide personal reasons or evidence for decisions or opinions (e.g., "I made this picture green because my mom likes green")	S.48.3 Cite examples to support their ideas (e.g., "I think the plant will die because when I forgot to water my plant it died")	S.60.4 Give evidence from observations or investigations	S.60.5 Begin to distinguish evidence from opinion		
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to engage in the process of engineering.								
Design Cycle			S.36.4 Gather information to help determine if something has been designed by humans	S.48.4 Identify a problem and, with adult assistance design a solution (e.g., device or process) to address that problem	S.60.6 Identify a problem and, with adult assistance, design a solution, test, and refine design elements			

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24 to 36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to understand patterns, process and relationships of living things.							
Unity and Diversity of Life				S.24.2 Explore characteristics of different plants and animals	S.36.5 Observe features of plants and animals and explore function of features	S.48.5 Compare and contrast basic features of living things (e.g., body parts and their uses) between and across groups	S.60.7 Group and classify living things based upon features, providing evidence to support groupings
						S.48.6 Recognize changes in living things over their lifespan by observing similarities and difference between babies and adults	S.60.8 Demonstrate an understanding of how living things grow and change through predictable stages (e.g., birth, growth, reproduction, death)
				S.24.3 Observe living things	S.36.6 Observe how a variety of living things obtain food as a source of energy for surviving	S.48.7 Explore how animals depend upon the environment for food, water and shelter	S.60.9 Provide examples of how animals depend on plants and other animals for food
Living Things and Their Interactions with the Environment and Each Other							
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to understand physical sciences.							
Energy, Force and Motion				S.24.4 Use trial and error to explore the way different object move	S.36.7 Observe different ways objects move (e.g., roll, bounce, spin, slide) and what happens when they interact (collide)	S.48.8 Investigate how objects' speed and direction can be varied	S.60.10 Make predictions and conduct simple experiments to change direction, speed and distance objects move
							S.60.11 Determine cause and effect of push/pull/collision that make objects, start, stop and change direction

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24 to 36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Matter and its properties				S.24.5 Observe simple attributes of materials (e.g., hard, soft)	S.36.8 Observe and describe attributes of materials that are related to their function (e.g., flexibility, transparency, strength)	S.48.9 Compare and contrast attributes of common materials related to their function (e.g., flexibility, transparency, strength)	S.60.12 Evaluate the appropriateness of a material for a given purpose based upon its properties
							S.60.13 Observe how heating and cooling cause changes to properties of materials (e.g., ice melts when we bring it inside, plastic becomes brittle when it is left outside in the cold)
Strand: Early learning experiences will support to understand features of earth.							
Earth's Features and the Effects of Weather and Water				S.24.6 Observe natural features of the earth (e.g., land, rain)	S.36.9 Describe common features of the earth (e.g., sky, land, and water) and what is found there (e.g., birds, fish, stars)	S.48.10 Observe, record, and note patterns regarding weather and the effects on the immediate environment (e.g., rain over a period of days causes flooding, sunny days cause the flower bed to dry out) S.48.11 Investigate how water interacts with other earth materials (e.g., sand, dirt, pebbles)	S.60.14 Give examples of ways in which weather variables (hot/cold temperatures, amount and intensity of precipitation, wind speed) affect us and/or cause changes to earth's features (e.g., the stream has greater water flow after snow melts)
Earth and Human Activity				S.24.7 Talk about different foods humans eat	S.24.10 Give examples of natural resources that humans use to survive (e.g., food, water)	S.48.12 Investigate how humans use design solutions to adapt natural resources to meet basic needs (e.g., cut trees to build houses, make applesauce out of apples)	S.60.15 Explore how humans' use of natural resources impacts the environment (e.g., if we catch all the salmon this can no longer be a food source, cutting down trees can cause erosion)

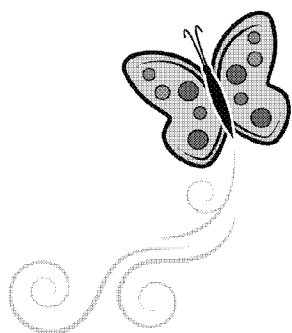


CIELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

Cognition

Making sense of the world, learning about numbers, nature and people and connecting with the world, staying with something and working hard to solve problems.



What adults can do...

Encourage

Exploring

Asking Questions and Making Choices

Pretending and Having Fun

Remembering

Trying New and Difficult Things

Infants and toddlers

Pretend with your child. Pretend a banana is a phone or feed a doll.

Give your child choices. Let your child choose a snack or what to wear.

Give your child lots of different experiences. Explore your neighborhood parks, libraries and museums. Play with things that are used in different ways (to make sounds, build, etc.)

Show your baby how things work. "Look at how the car rolls."

Play games that involve back-and forth. As your child gets older, help them wait for a short time.

Preschoolers

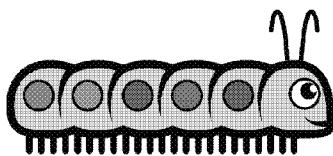
Use everyday routines to notice patterns. Point out familiar routines (first we wash hands, then we eat).

Sort and categorize throughout the day. Cleaning up and toys and laundry are great sorting activities.

Wonder with your child. "I wonder if it's going to rain today." Encourage your child to ask questions.

Point out and use symbols. Encourage your child to recognize and names signs and symbols.

Support your child to finish things they start. Help them plan and stick with things for longer periods of time.




Learning Progression	Cognition					
	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years
	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>	Indicators: <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>
Subdomain Skills: Early learning experiences will support children in their approaches to learning.						
Curiosity and Initiative	C.6.1 Use senses to explore immediate environment	C.12.1 Seek familiar people and/or objects that are not there	C.18.1 Use senses to actively investigate and explore the effects of new actions on objects	C.24.1 Explore objects, activities, and environments	C.36.1 Ask questions and seek answers from a variety of sources	C.60.1 Investigate ways to make something happen
	C.6.2 Orient to and vocalize in response to sights and sounds in the immediate environment	C.12.2 Show interest in a wider variety of sights and sounds with greater purpose, often in shared experiences with adults	C.18.2 Focus attention on interesting sights or sounds, often in shared experiences with adults	C.24.2 Engage in interactions and self-selected activities for increasing length of time	C.36.2 Maintain interest in self-selected activities and may seek to engage others or ask questions	C.60.2 Express interest in learning about a specific topic over time C.60.3 Engage in preferred and some non-preferred activities for longer periods of time. Remain with some high interest activities 15 minutes or longer
Eagerness to Learn	C.6.3 Laugh, babble, increase movement, and engage in repetition of a learning activity	C.12.3 Seek out new materials and experiences	C.18.3 Explore new ways to use objects and observe results	C.24.3 Demonstrate a desire to accomplish a new skill; may look to others for approval and congratulations	C.36.3 Demonstrate enthusiasm for new learning (may be within familiar contexts)	C.60.4 Show pride in accomplishment when reaching mastery of a skill and share experiences with others
Cooperation with Peers in Learning Experiences					C.48.4 Engage in and complete learning activities with peer	C.60.5 Plan and complete learning activity with a peer
					C.48.5 Help and cooperate in group	C.60.6 Model or teach peers how to use materials or complete a task

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Subdomain Skills: Early learning experiences will support children to use logic and reasoning.							
Cause and Effect	C.6.4 Show interest in the results of their actions and "accidental" discoveries	C.12.4 Recognize effect of actions on object -cause and effect (e.g., shake a rattle and it makes a sound)	C.18.4 Learn by observing or listening to others and repeating their actions or verbalizations	C.24.4 Repeat actions over and over and notice results	C.36.4 Vary actions to observe different results (e.g., hits lever harder to see if result changes)	C.48.6 Manipulate materials and communicate about the impact of own actions	C.60.7 Try multiple uses of same materials and observe differing results
Attributes, Sorting and Patterns	C.6.5 Recognize familiar people or objects in the immediate environment (e.g., notices differences between various people and objects)	C.12.5 Respond to new or novel objects with interest recognizing differences	C.18.5 Match objects that are the same (simple categorizing)	C.24.5 Sort objects by type (e.g., cars and blocks) and put some objects in order (e.g., lines up three objects from smallest to biggest)	C.36.5 Identify differences between objects across multiple characteristics (e.g., texture, color, shape, size)	C.48.7 Identify similarities and differences in objects, people, events, sounds based on one attribute (e.g., same or different colors, loud, or soft sound)	C.60.8 Compare relative attributes of objects, people, events, sounds (e.g., louder, more, less)
				C.60.9 Use familiar patterns to solve problems and reason (e.g., if we go to the library every other day and we went yesterday, today we will....)			
				C.48.8 Recognize patterns in routines, objects, and/or sounds and replicate sequence using objects or language	C.60.10 Begin to question accuracy of information and sources as evidenced by sharing conflicting information from another source (e.g., when the teachers mentions that together, tells teacher, "my dad says")		

	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Problem Solving		C.12.6 Use a variety of actions to obtain desired objects	C.18.6 Purposefully experiment with the effects of new actions upon objects	C.24.6 Try a successful strategy in a new situation (e.g., tugging or prying on something that is stuck)	C.36.6 Use objects in new and unexpected ways to solve problems through trial and error	C.48.9 Think of and try an alternative strategy when a first attempt at solving a problem is unsuccessful	C.60.11 Try multiple strategies to solve a problem and draw on multiple resources (e.g., look at what a peer is doing for ideas)
	C.6.6 Sometimes will show they can solve problems by reaching for desired toys or blanket	C.12.7 Solve simple manipulative challenges through observation and imitation (e.g., putting something "into a bucket")	C.18.7 Utilize shapes and sorting boxes; may use trial and error to fit objects together	C.24.7 Take things apart and try to put them back together	C.36.7 Use spatial relationships to solve problems (e.g., fits pieces into puzzle)		
Symbolic Representation			C.18.8 Use dolls and stuffed animals as if they were real (e.g., rocks doll, pets stuffed dog)	C.24.8 Play with dolls or stuffed animals and realistic props together (e.g., use a play spoon to feed a doll)	C.36.8 Use a similar object to represent another object in play (e.g., pretend a pencil is a spoon)	C.48.10 Use or make a prop to represent an object (e.g., build a telephone)	C.60.12 Use dissimilar objects to represent other objects in play or perform an action with an imaginary object (e.g., use stirring action without anything in hand)
			C.18.9 Engage in pretend play with realistic objects (e.g., uses a play phone to pretend to make a phone call)	C.24.9 Act out familiar functions in play (e.g., sweeping floor, pouring milk)	C.36.9 Act out relational roles in play (e.g., mom or dad with baby)	C.48.11 Act out actions or scenarios involving familiar roles (e.g., teacher, doctor, or firefighter)	C.60.13 Engage in extended pretend play scenarios and display recognition of the difference between pretend or fantasy situations and reality
						C.48.12 Represent people, places, or things through simple drawings, movements, and three-dimensional construction	C.60.14 Represent people, places, or things through drawings, movements, and/or three dimensional constructions that are increasingly abstract (e.g., may draw a map that includes an "X" that marks the location of the treasure)

Executive Function		C.12.8 Indicate preferences non-verbally	C.18.10 Indicate preferences by pointing and using one or two words	C.24.10 Indicate preferences using simple language	C.36.10 Make choices based on preferences	C.48.13 With adult assistance, choose activities and plan what to do	C.60.15 Make a plan, follow through, and review plan based on what they actually did. Indicate reasons for choice, set goals, and follow plan
	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-36 months	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
	C.6.7 Repeat actions to obtain similar results	C.12.9 Practice an activity many times until successful	C.18.11 Complete simple activities	C.24.11 Complete simple activities despite frustration	C.36.11 Complete self-selected short-term activities many times to gain mastery	C.48.14 Continue working through moderately difficult activities, despite some frustration	C.60.16 Complete longer term and more complex tasks with a focus on the goal, despite frustration
			C.18.12 Use objects in new and unexpected ways	C.24.12 Purposefully try multiple ways of using the same objects	C.36.12 Realize when a something is not working and with adult assistance can try another approach	C.48.15 With adult assistance, stop and consider alternatives when encountering a problem	C.60.17 Generate or seek out multiple solutions to a problem
				C.24.13 Hold in mind a simple task long enough to complete it (e.g., wiping a table, walking across the room to throw something in the garbage)	C.36.13 Remember where recently used objects were placed	C.48.16 Engage in games that involve remembering (e.g. memory)	LR.60.18 Hold in mind the topic of group discussion and contribute personal experience (e.g., when talking about something that is broken says, "my mom used a screwdriver to fix our shelf")
				C.24.14 Engage in interactions and self-selected activities for increasing length of time	C.36.14 Maintain focus on high-interest activities in the face of routine distractions	C.48.17 Maintain focus on high interest activities in the face of minor social or sensory distractions	C.60.19 Engage in preferred and some non-preferred activities for longer periods of time. Remain with some high interest activities 15 minutes or longer
				C.36.15 With adult support, resist impulses in structured settings for brief, but increasing periods of time.	C.60.20 Typically resists impulses and can wait longer to respond in more structured settings (e.g., at a restaurant, in circle time in preschool)		
				C.48.18 With adult reminders can briefly inhibit initial response (e.g., stop imitating inappropriate behaviors of peers, wait turn to respond to question or prompt in group setting)			

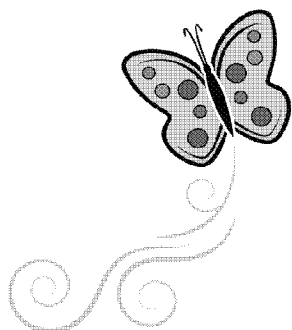


CTELDS

Connecticut Early Learning
and Development Standards

Social Studies

Understanding the world and knowing about the people in it.
This starts with knowing about your family, then the
community and world.



What adults can do...

Encourage

- Understanding family
- Hearing stories about the past
- Recognizing how people are the same and different

Infants and toddlers

Help them learn about themselves.

Children need to learn about their own bodies, their family and their feelings so they can learn about others.

Talk about family. Talk about who is a part of your family and about other people's family.

Talk about the places you go. Children will learn about the community when you talk about the store, the library, the park, etc.

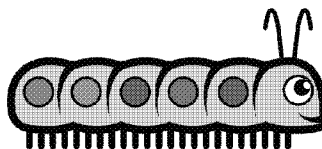
Preschoolers

Point out where things are in the community. Draw maps of your home or school.

Talk about how people are the same and different. Help your child to appreciate people who are different from them.

Talk about when you were little. Children love to hear stories and can begin to learn about time and history.

Play "store". Children can learn about buying and selling through play.



Learning Progression		Social Studies	
		3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
	Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>		Indicators <i>This is evident, for example, when children:</i>
Early Learning experiences will support children to understand self, family and a diverse community.			
Individual Development and Identity	SS.48.1 Identify physical characteristics of self (e.g., eyes, hair, skin, etc.)	SS.60.1 Demonstrate an understanding that there are similarities and differences among people and families	
	SS.48.2 Demonstrate an understanding of self as part of a family (e.g., parents, grandparents, siblings, caregivers)		
	SS.48.3 Identify cultural characteristics of self, family, and community (e.g., home language, foods, modes of transportation, shelter, etc.)	SS.60.2 Demonstrate understanding that there are similarities and differences among the cultural characteristics of people, families and communities (e.g., languages, foods, art, customs, modes of transportation and shelter)	
Early Learning experiences will support children to learn about people and the environment.			
Power, Authority, and Governance	SS.48.4 Demonstrate an understanding of some reasons for basic rules in the home, cultural community, and/or classroom	SS.60.3 Demonstrate understanding of the reasons for rules and laws in the home, cultural community, and/or classroom	
People, Places, and Environments	SS.48.5 Demonstrate awareness that people share the environment with other people, animals, and plants and have the responsibility to care for them	SS.60.4 Demonstrate awareness that people have a responsibility to take care of the environment through active participation in activities such as recycling	
	SS.48.6 Describe, draw, or construct aspects of the geography of the classroom and/or home	SS.60.5 Describe, draw, or construct aspects of the classroom, home and/or community (including roads, building, bodies of water, etc.)	
Civic deals and Practices	SS.48.7 Participate in jobs and responsibilities at home, classroom, or community	SS.60.6 Demonstrate an understanding of why certain responsibilities are important and participate in fulfilling responsibilities at home, classroom or community (e.g., cleaning up, caring for pets)	

	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years
Early Learning experiences will support children to develop an understanding of economic systems and resources.		
Individuals, Groups, and Institutions	SS.48.8 Demonstrate awareness of a variety of jobs in their community and the work associated with them through conversation and/or play	SS.60.7 Demonstrate awareness of the tools and technologies associated with a variety of roles and jobs; expressing interest in different careers
Production, distribution, and Consumption	SS.48.9 Demonstrate beginning understanding of commerce through exploring the roles of buying and selling in play	SS.60.8 Demonstrate understanding of the basic relationship of money for the purchase of food, shelter, goods and services, moving toward an understanding of the difference between wants and needs
Science, technology, and Society	SS.48.10 Understand the use of tools, including technology, for a variety of purposes	SS.60.9 Begin to be aware of technology and how it affects life
Early Learning experiences will support children to understand change overtime.		
Time, Continuity, and Change	SS.48.11 Demonstrate a basic understanding of sequence of events and time periods (e.g., using terms such as time of day, yesterday, today and tomorrow)	SS.60.10 Demonstrate a beginning understanding of past, present, and future as it relates to one's self, family, and community
	SS.48.12 Demonstrate a beginning understanding of change over time through discussing topics such as their own growth and how they have changed	SS.60.11 Demonstrate a beginning understanding of change over time through discussing, representing, or playing about expanding topics such as their own growth and family history

Learning Progression	Supplemental Dual Language Development Framework		
	Beginning Home Language and first experiences with second language	Middle Beginning use of Second language	Later Increasing use of Second Language
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop listening skills.			
Comprehension of Information Presented Orally	DLL.B.1 Demonstrate an understanding of words related to basic and advanced concepts in L1 that are appropriate for their age; May understand a few words in L2	DLL.M.1 Demonstrate listening comprehension of familiar information and concepts in L2, especially with visual and verbal supports (e.g., repetition of information, clarification)	DLL.L.1 Demonstrate listening comprehension of familiar and unfamiliar content and concepts in L2 with continued and appropriate support (including the use of contextual clues real experiences, concrete objects, visual/films, etc.)
Comprehension of Oral Instructions, Questions and Prompts	DLL.B.2 Respond to directions, prompts and questions in L1 and acknowledge or respond nonverbally to common words or phrases in L2 when accompanied by gestures and contextual cues	DLL.M.2 Begin to respond to age appropriate routine directions, prompts and familiar questions in L2, especially when there are contextual clues	DLL.L.2 Respond to age appropriate directions, prompts and questions in L2, including multi-step directions with continued and appropriate support (including the use of contextual clues real experiences, concrete objects, visual/films, etc.)
Vocabulary	DLL.B.3 Demonstrate growing vocabulary in L1 while beginning to attend to L2 language, relying on simplified speech and visual or non-verbal cues or the actual objects	DLL.M.3 Demonstrate understanding of familiar words and simple phrases in L2, especially objects, actions, and basic common social vocabulary	DLL.L.3 Comprehend and respond to increasingly complex and varied L2 vocabulary with continued and appropriate support (including the use of contextual clues real experiences, concrete objects, visual/films, etc.)
Pronunciation and Intonation Patterns	DLL.B.4 Demonstrate an age appropriate understanding of intonation patterns in L1 and recognize a couple of basic patterns in L2 (e.g. intonation used for question versus statement in English)	DLL.M.4 Respond appropriately to an increasing number of basic intonations patterns in L2 (e.g., can follow and use intonation of songs with or without the correct words)	DLL.L.4 Distinguish intonation patterns and word stress that affect meaning in questions, statements, exclamations and commands in L2; May still demonstrate difficulty hearing some sounds
Conversations and Discussions	DLL.B.5 Demonstrate active listening strategies about personal topics by attending to the speaker nonverbally, making eye contact (if culturally relevant) and attending to gestures	DLL.M.5 Use age-appropriate listening strategies during conversations and discussions, asking on-topic questions with support	DLL.L.5 Attend to speaker during conversation and discussion in L2, responding appropriately with continued and appropriate support (including the use of contextual clues, real experiences, concrete objects, visual/films, etc.)
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop speaking skills.			
Communication of Needs	DLL.B.6 May use L1 or L2 to attempt to communicate; In L2 dominant environments may rely on nonverbal communication, such as gestures or behaviors, to seek attention, request objects, or initiate a response from others	DLL.M.6 Combine nonverbal and some verbal communication in L2 to be understood by others (may use L1 and L2 in combination or may use imitative, telegraphic and/or formulaic speech); Request items in L2; May use social greetings and common phrases (e.g., "I don't know") in L2	DLL.L.6 Show increasing ability to use verbal communication in L2 to be understood by others; Demonstrate increased participation in conversations with peers and adults
Conversation and Discussion	DLL.B.7 Use L1 in during language exchanges and use basic non-verbal communication techniques such as gestures, etc.; May occasionally use single words in L2 to communicate	DLL.M.7 Use both L1 and L2 to engage with peers/adults, request or respond; May use L1 and L2 interchangeably (code-switching) and engages in age appropriate social discussions	DLL.L.7 Demonstrate ability to engage in age-appropriate conversations in L2 on a variety of topics

Pronunciation and Intonation	DLL.B.8 Produce age appropriate sounds and phonemic structures in L1; May apply L1 patterns when using single words or short phrases in L2	DLL.M.8 Use approximations of sounds and some age-appropriate sounds in L2 but may still carry pronunciation patterns from L1; May add or omit sounds in L2 even when repeating after a model; Use age appropriate pronunciation, enunciation, intonation, and fluency using words, phrases and simple sentences when repeating after a model	DLL.L.8 Generally use age appropriate pronunciation, enunciation, intonation and fluency in L2 but may still carry pronunciation patterns from L1
Grammar and Syntax	DLL.B.9 Use age appropriate grammar in L1 (e.g. plurals, simple past tense, etc.); May apply L1 patterns when using single words or short phrases in L2	DLL.M.9 Begin to use some L2 grammatical structures but may make still apply rules from L1 to L2	DLL.L.9 Increasingly use age appropriate forms of grammar in L2, (e.g. plurals, simple past tense, subject-verb agreement)
Social Conventions	DLL.B.10 Use age appropriate social communication skills in L1; May apply L1 conventions when using single words or short phrases in L2	DLL.M.10 Show a beginning understanding of social conventions in L2	DLL.L.10 Use age appropriate verbal and non-verbal social conventions in L2
Vocabulary Production	DLL.B.11 Use age appropriate vocabulary in L1 and begin to use and demonstrate understanding of (through nonverbal communication or gestures) basic, concrete labels in L2	DLL.M.11 Begin to use L2 vocabulary, especially concrete objects and routine verbs.; Also begin to use social greetings and common phrases/words and appropriate nonverbal actions that indicated understanding of common phrases/words	DLL.L.11 Use age-appropriate and varied vocabulary in a variety of contexts with continued and appropriate support (including the use of contextual clues real experiences, concrete objects, visual/films, etc.)
Utterance Length and Complexity	DLL.B.12 Use age appropriate range of utterance length in L1 and may use isolated words in L2	DLL.M.12 Use two and three word utterances in L2 while continuing to expand utterance length and complexity in L1	DLL.L.12 Use age-appropriate utterance length in L2 with increasing use of more complex grammatical structures and a wider variety of elements of speech (e.g. descriptors, pronouns, etc.)
Academic Information (inquiry, narrative development)	DLL.B.13 Prefer use of L1 to engage in learning and exploration across developmental domains or content areas (e.g. ask and answer age appropriate questions related to science and math, identifies emotions, retells stories, etc.)	DLL.M.13 Begin to use L2 to engage in inquiry and learning experiences; May rely on students that share common L2 for understanding and learning. Need concrete experiences to acquire understanding and make connections to L1, prior experiences and known concepts	DLL.L.13 Are able to use L1 or L2 in a range of learning and exploratory contexts with continued ongoing support in L1 and L2
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to develop early literacy skills. These progressions apply to children approximately 3-5 years of age.			
Vocabulary, Symbols and Environmental Print	DLL.B.14 Begin to recognize that symbols (classroom, home or community) in the environment carry a consistent meaning in L1 or L	DLL.M.14 Recognize in the environment (classroom, home or community) some familiar symbols, words and print labels in L1 or L2	DLL.L.14 Recognize in the environment (classroom, home or community) an increasing number of familiar symbols, words, and print labels in L2
Connect written text and spoken language	DLL.B.15 Begin to recognize the first letter in their own name or the character for their own name in L1 or L2	DLL.M.15 Identify some letters or characters in L1 and L2 and the sounds associated with them.	DLL.L.15 Begin to demonstrate that the letters or characters of the L2 alphabet or system are symbols that make up or represent words
Phonemic awareness	DLL.B.16 Attend to and experiment with different sounds or tone in words in L1	DLL.M.16 Attend to and experiment with different sounds or tone in words in L1 and L2 with support	DLL.L.16 Experiment with and vary sounds in words in L1 and L2 (e.g. manipulating onsets, rimes and phonemes to create rhymes, alliteration, etc.)
Written language	DLL.B.17 Begin to demonstrate an awareness that written language can be in L1 or L2	DLL.M.17 Begin to use marks or symbols to represent spoken language in L1 or L2	DLL.L.17 Continue to develop beginning writing skills by using letters or symbols from L2 to represent their ideas

Appendix A: Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet: Early Learning Standards Workgroup

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Appendix C: References

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Appendix D: Early Learning and Development Standards to Common Core State Standards Alignment — English Language Arts

Language andLitercy Early Learning and Development Standards			Common Core State Standards inEnglish Language Arts
	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years	Kindergarten
Strand: Understand Language (Receptive Language)			
Word comprehension	L.48.1 Understand words or signs for objects, actions and visible attributes found frequently in both real & symbolic contexts	L.48.1 Understand words or signs for objects, actions and visible attributes found frequently in both real & symbolic contexts	CC.K.L.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content. CC.K.L.4.a Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing duck is a bird and learning the verb to duck). CC.K.L.4.b Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., -ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word. CC.K.L.5 With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings. CC.K.L.5.a Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent. CC.K.L.5.b Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms). CC.K.L.5.c Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colorful). CC.K.L.6 Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.
Language comprehension	L.48.2 Understand increasingly complex sentences that include 2 - 3 concepts (e.g. "Put the blue paper under the box.")	L.48.2 Understand increasingly complex sentences that include 2 - 3 concepts (e.g. "Put the blue paper under the box.")	
Strand: Use language (Expressive language)			
Vocabulary	L.48.3 Use accepted words for objects, actions and attributes encountered frequently in both real and symbolic contexts	L.60.3 Use an increasing variety and specificity of accepted words for objects, actions and attributes encountered in both real and symbolic contexts	
	L.48.4 Use simple pronouns (I, me, you, mine, he, she)		
	L.48.5 Begin to use some words that are not a part of everyday conversational speech but that are learned through books and personal experiences (e.g., gigantic, rapidly, frustrated, transportation, race or jog)	L.60.4 Use more complex words learned through books and personal experiences (e.g., label favorite shirt as chartreuse, or know that a paleontologist studies dinosaurs)	
Expressing ideas, feelings and needs	L.48.6 Communicate about current or removed events and/ or objects	L.60.5 Use more complex words to describe the relationships between objects and ideas (e.g. position words such as under, beside and comparative words such as bigger or longer)	CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events. and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail. CC.K.SL.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail. CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.
	L.48.7 Use increasingly longer, complex sentences that combine phrases or concepts to communicate ideas		

Language Structure	L.48.8 Use basic grammar rules including irregular past tense and questions Note: Variations in applying grammar rules may be due to dual language learning and/or alternative grammar usage by their family	L.60.6 Use basic grammar rules including subject-verb agreement, tenses, regular & irregular past tense, irregular plurals Note: Variations in applying grammar rules may be due to dual language learning and/or alternative grammar usage by their family	CC.K.L.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when speaking. CC.K.L.1.a Print many upper- and lowercase letters. CC.K.L.1.b Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs. CC.K.L.1.c Form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes). CC.K.L.1.d Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how). CC.K.L.1.e Use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with). CC.K.L.1.f Produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.
	L.48.7 Use increasingly longer, complex sentences that combine phrases or concepts to communicate ideas		

Strand: Use language for social interaction

Conventions of Conversation	L.48.10 Maintain a topic of conversation over the course of several turns	L.60.8 Initiate, maintain and end conversations by repeating what other person says and/or asking questions	CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. CC.K.SL.1.a Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion). CC.K.SL.1.b Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges. CC.K.SL.2 Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood. CC.K.SL.3 Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
Use Language to Interact	L.48.11 Answer simple who, what, where and why questions	L.60.9 Use language to share idea and gain information	

Strand: Book Appreciation and Knowledge

Show interest and engage with books	L.48.12 Select fiction and non-fiction books to be read and attend with interest	L.60.10 Independently choose to 'read' books and select a variety of texts, including fiction and nonfiction	CC.K.R.F.4 Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding. CC.K.R.I.10 Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding. CC.K.R.L.10 Actively engage in group activities with purpose and understanding.
Understands stories or information	L.48.12 Demonstrate comprehension of through retelling with use of pictures and props, acting out main events or share information learned from nonfiction text	L.60.9 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including story elements (e.g. setting, characters, events) and/or shares key details from informational text	CC.K.R.I.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. CC.K.R.I.2 With prompting and support, identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. CC.K.R.L.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. CC.K.R.L.2 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details. CC.K.R.L.3 With prompting and support, identify characters, setting and major events in a story.

Stories or information may be shared through oral storytelling, sharing of pictures and/or books	L.48.13 Ask and answer simple who, what, where and why questions related to story or text	L.60.10 Ask and answer who, what, where and why questions related to story or text	CC.K.R.I.3 With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
		L.60.11 Use connections between self and character experience and emotions to increase comprehension	
Strand: Knowledge of Print and Its Uses			
Book Concepts	L.48.14 Looks at pages of a book from left to right (or according to conventions of home language)	L.60.12 Know how print is read (left to right, top to bottom, front to back or according to convention of home language)	CC.K.R.F.1 Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. CC.K.R.F.1.a Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page. CC.K.R.I.4 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. CC.K.R.I.5 Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book. CC.K.R.I.6 Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text. CC.K.R.L.4 Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. CC.K.R.L.5 Recognize common types of texts (e.g. storybooks, poems). CC.K.R.L.6 With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story. CC.K.R.I.7 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts). CC.K.R.I.8 With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text. CC.K.R.I.9 With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures). CC.K.R.L.7 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts). CC.K.R.L.9 With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.
	L.48.15 Recognizes that print represents spoken words (i.e., first name in print, environmental labels)	L.60.13 Know that books have titles, authors, illustrators or photographers	
		L.60.14 Recognize words as a unit of print and that letters are grouped to form words	
Print Concepts	L.48.16 Identify some printed words and/or common symbols (e.g. bathroom signs) in the context of the environment	L.60.15 Identify some familiar printed words out of context L.60.16 Begins to use awareness of letter sounds along with pictures to read words in text	CC.K.R.F.3 Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. CC.K.R.F.3.a Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary or most frequent sound for each consonant. CC.K.R.F.3.b Associate the long and short sounds with the common spellings (graphemes) for the five major vowels. CC.K.R.F.3.c Read common high-frequency words by sight. (e.g., the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does). CC.K.R.F.3.d Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

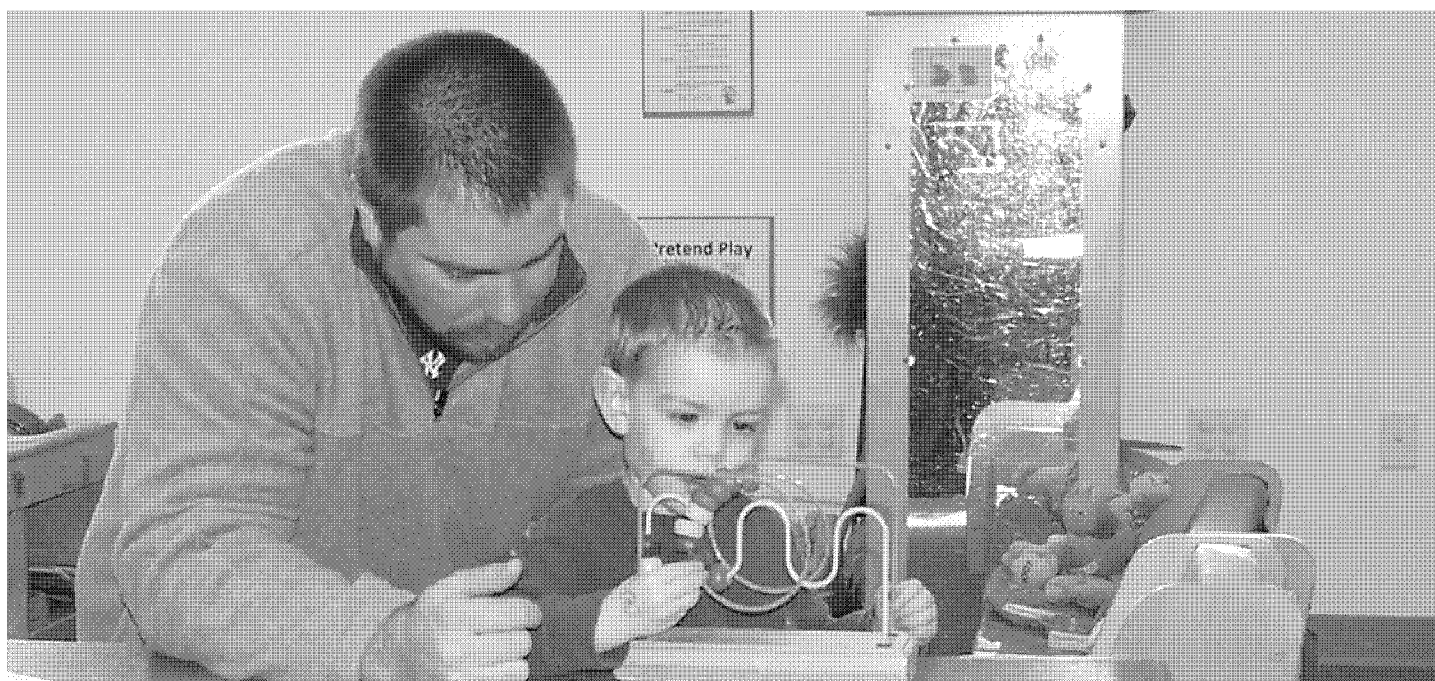
Letter Recognition	L.48.17 Recognize some letters especially those in one's own name	L.60.17 Recognize and names known letters of the alphabet in familiar and unfamiliar words	CC.K.R.F.1.b Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters. CC.K.R.F.1.c Understand that words are separated by spaces in print. CC.K.R.F.1.d Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
		L.60.18 Make some letter-sound connections	
Strand: Phonological Awareness:			
Phonological Awareness	L.48.18 Recognize rhyming words in songs, chants, or poems.	L.60.19 Produce rhyming words or words that have same initial sound.	CC.K.R.F.2 Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes) CC.K.R.F.2.a Recognize and produce rhyming words. CC.K.R.F.2.b Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words. CC.K.R.F.2.c Blend and segment onsets and rhymes of single-syllable spoken words. CC.K.R.F.2.d Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words.* (This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.) CC.K.R.F.2.e Add or substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one-syllable words to make new words.
	L.48.19 Identify when initial sounds in words are the same.	L.60.20 Recognize which words in a set of words begin with the same sound.	
	L. 48.20 Distinguish individual words in a sentence.	L.60.21 Distinguish syllables in words	
Strand: Conveying meaning through drawing, letters and words			
Conveying meaning through drawing, letters and words	L.48.21 Draw or "writes" to convey an idea, event or story. "Writing" involves scribbles, letters and/ or letter-like shapes (e.g. make pretend list, or use their words to dictate a message to communicate with others)	L.60.22 Draw original stories with a beginning, middle and end	CC.K.W.1 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favorite book is ...). CC.K.W.2 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic. CC.K.W.3 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened. CC.K.W.5 Production and Distribution of Writing: With guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed. CC.K.W.6 Production and Distribution of Writing: With guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers. CC.K.W.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of books by a favorite author and express opinions about them). CC.K.W.8 Research to Build and Present Knowledge: With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
	L.48.22 Writing is distinct from drawing and combines scribbles with letter-like forms	L.60.23 Use early developmental spelling; may use one letter for the initial or final sound to represent whole word	CC.K.L.2 Demonstrate command of the convention of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. CC.K.L.2.a Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun I. CC.K.L.2.b Recognize and name end punctuation. CC.K.L.2.c Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes).

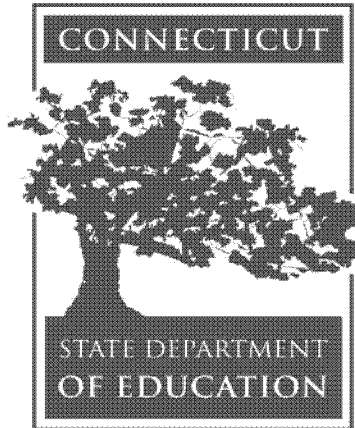
Appendix E: Early Learning and Development Standards to Common Core State Standards Alignment — Mathematics

Mathematics Early Learning and Development Standards			Common Core State Standards in Mathematics
	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years	Kindergarten
Strand: Understand Counting and Cardinality			
Number names	M.48.1 Say or sign the number sequence up to at least 10	M.60.1 Say and sign the number sequence up to at least 20	K.CC.1. Count to 100 by ones and by tens. K.CC.2. Count forward beginning from a given number within the known sequence (instead of having to begin at 1.)
Cardinality	M.48.2 Count up to at least five objects using one-to-one correspondence, using the number name of the last object counted to represent the total number of objects in a set	M.60.2 Count up to 10 objects using one-to-one correspondence, regardless of configuration, using the number name of the last object counted to represent the total number of objects in a set	K.CC.4. Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality. a. When counting objects, say the number names in the standard order, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object. b. Understand that the last number name said tells the number of objects counted. The number of objects is the same regardless of their arrangement or the order in which they were counted. c. Understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger.
	M.48.3 Count out a set of objects up to 4	M.60.3 Count out a set of objects up to 5	K.CC.5. Count to answer “how many?” questions about as many as 20 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 10 things in a scattered configuration; given a number from 1–20, count out that many objects.
Written Numerals	M.48.4 Recognize written numerals up to at least five	M.60.4 Recognize written numerals up to at least 10	K.CC.3. Write numbers from 0 to 20. Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0-20 (with 0 representing a count of no objects).
Recognizing quantities	M.48.5 Recognize and name, without counting, the number of objects in small groups of at least 3 or 4 objects	M.60.5 Quickly recognize and name, without counting, the number of objects in collections of up to at least five items	

Comparison	M.48.6 Compare sets of 1-5 objects using a visual matching or counting strategy and describing the comparison as more, less than, or the same	M.60.6 Compare sets of up to 10 objects using a visual matching or counting strategy and describing the comparison as more, less than, or the same	K.CC.6. Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group, e.g., by using matching and counting strategies.* (* Include groups with up to ten objects.) K.CC.7. Compare two numbers between 1 and 10 presented as written numerals.
Strand: Understand and describe relationships to solve problems (operations and algebraic thinking)			
Number operations	M.48.7 Understand that adding to (or taking away) one or more objects from a group will increase or decrease the objects in the group	M.60.7 Use real-world situations and concrete objects to model and solve addition (e.g., putting together) and subtraction (e.g., taking away) problems up through 5 M.60.8 Recognize and describe parts contained in larger numbers by composing number combinations up to at least five (e.g. an recognize how many have been secretly taken away from a group of five objects)	K.NBT.1. Compose and decompose numbers from 11 to 19 into ten ones and some further ones, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each composition or decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., $18 = 10 + 8$); understand that these numbers are composed by ten ones and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine ones. K.OA.1. Represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings*, sounds (e.g., claps), acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations. * Drawings need not show details, but should show the mathematics in the problem. (This applies wherever drawings are mentioned in the Standards.) K.OA.2. Solve addition and subtraction word problems, and add and subtract within 10, e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent the problem. K.OA.3. Decompose numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., $5 = 2 + 3$ and $5 = 4 + 1$). K.OA.4. For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record the answer with a drawing or equation. K.OA.5. Fluently add and subtract within 5.
Strand: Understand the attributes and relative properties of objects (measurement and data)			
See Attributes, Sorting and Patterns strand in Cognition			
Measurement	M.48.8 Recognize measurable attribute of an object such as length, weight or capacity	M.60.9 Compare the measurable attributes of two or more objects (e.g., length, weight and capacity) and describe the comparison using appropriate vocabulary (e.g., longer, shorter, same length, heavier, lighter, same weight, holds more, holds less, holds the same amount) M.60.10 Begin to use strategies to determine measurable attributes (length or capacity of objects); may use comparison, standard or non-standard measurement tools	K.MD.1. Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object. K.MD.2 Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common, to see which object has "more of"/"less of" the attribute, and describe the difference. For example, directly compare the heights of two children and describe one child as taller/shorter.

Data	M.48.9 Sort objects into two groups, counts, and compares the quantity of the groups formed (e.g., indicates which is more)	M. 60.11 Represent data using a concrete object or picture graph according to one attribute	
Sorting and Classifying	M.48.10 Sort and classify objects by one attribute into two or more groups (e.g. color, size, shape)	M.60.12 Sort and classify a set of objects on the basis of one attribute independently and describe the sorting rule; can re-sort and classify the same set up objects based on a different attribute	K.MD.3. Classify objects into given categories; count the numbers of objects in each category and sort the categories by\ count. ** ** Limit category counts to be less than or equal to 10.
Strand: Understand shapes and spatial relationships (geometry and spatial sense)			
Spatial relationships	M.48.11 Use positional vocabulary (e.g., up/down, in/ out, on/off, under) to identify and describe the location of an object	M.60.13 Use relational vocabulary of proximity (e.g., beside, next to, between, above, below, over and under) to identify and describe the location of an object	K.G.1. Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as above, below, beside, in front of, behind, and next to. K.G.2. Correctly name shapes regardless of their orientations or overall size. K.G.3. Identify shapes as two-dimensional (lying in a plane, "flat") or three-dimensional ("solid"). K.G.4. Analyze and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes, in different sizes and orientations, using informal language to describe their similarities, differences, parts (e.g., number of sides and vertices/"corners") and other attributes (e.g., having sides of equal length).
Identifying shapes	M.48.12 Identify 2- dimensional shapes (starting with familiar shapes such as circle and triangle) in different orientations and sizes	M.60.14 Identify and describe a variety of 2- dimensional and 3- dimensional shapes with mathematical names (e.g., ball/ sphere, box/rectangular prism, can/cylinder) regardless of orientation and size	
Composing shapes	M.48.13 Combine two or more shapes to create a new shape or to represent an object in the environment	M.60.15 Complete a shape puzzle or a new figure by putting multiple shapes together with purpose	K.G.5. Model shapes in the world by building shapes from components (e.g., sticks and clay balls) and drawing shapes. K.G.6. Compose simple shapes to form larger shapes. For example, "Can you join these two triangles with full sides touching to make a rectangle?"





Connecticut Department of Education Preschool and Kindergarten Curriculum Guide

The attached document is designed to be used by preschool and kindergarten programs when making decisions related to curriculum. This document may be used to review existing curriculum, to help in the development of curriculum policies and documents, or for reviewing a commercially available curricular product. While reviewing policies and documents, it is likely that not every component listed in this document will be evident. This document may serve as a resource in making program improvements, considering ways to supplement and/or improve implementation of purchased curriculum, or may serve as a guide for programs engaging the process of curriculum development.

Curriculum includes the skills, knowledge and concepts to be addressed and the plans for learning experiences through which progress will occur. In addition to planning for the materials and activities to support children's learning, intentional teaching includes consideration of the teacher's role in supporting children's growth, the needs and interests of individual children, and how families will be engaged.

The Preschool and Kindergarten Curriculum Guide includes two sections:

1. Program policies, procedures and administrative supports critical for the quality implementation of curriculum.
2. Components to be included in written curriculum documents

Each of these sections includes specific criteria that support the following characteristics of a high-quality curriculum

1. Intentional: All aspects of the curriculum are purposeful and planned with specific goals and knowledge of children and families in mind
2. Responsive: Programs and staff react or respond to the changing social-emotional, academic, physical and/or cultural needs of the children and families they serve
3. Reflective: Staff engage in ongoing, thoughtful consideration and change in order to best meet the needs of the children and families they serve

Preschool and Kindergarten Curriculum Guide

Program Policies, Procedures, and Administrative Support	Indicators of Quality	Comments/Next Steps	Alignment to program accreditation, evaluation and improvement tools
Promote curriculum decisions that are intentional	Mission/philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> A written philosophy statement exists <input type="checkbox"/> A written mission statement exists		NAEYC: 2.A.01 , 10.A.01
	Guiding Documents <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum decisions adhere to the written philosophy and/or mission statement of an organization <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum decisions adhere to ethic statements and best practices promoted by nationally recognized professional organizations (e.g. NAEYC, NACCP, DEC, IRA). <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum decisions meet the requirements of funding sources <input type="checkbox"/> Current research/references guide decisions related to curriculum		NAEYC: 10.A.01, 10.A.01 Head Start Performance Standard: 1304.21 (a)
	Curriculum Development and Review Process <input type="checkbox"/> There is an articulated process for reviewing and revising curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> There is a timeline for reviewing and revising curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Key stakeholders are involved in making decisions related to curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> A process exists to ensure alignment to infant/toddler curriculum, standards and/or programming. <input type="checkbox"/> A process exists to ensure alignment to curriculum, standards and/or programming in subsequent grades.		NAEYC: 10.B.02, 10.B.08

Program Policies, Procedures, and Administrative Support	Indicators of Quality	Comments/Next Steps	Alignment to accreditation, evaluation and improvement tools
	Ongoing Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Administrators ensure that teaching teams have a minimum of one hour per week devoted to planning, preparation and reflection. . <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development is provided for tools and materials to be included as part of curriculum, assessment, or planning <input type="checkbox"/> Staff is provided opportunities for onsite, job embedded support <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibilities of classroom staff in relation to planning, implementing, and assessing are clearly articulated. 		NAEYC: 10.B.01, 4.D.02, 10.E.12 ECERS-R: 40-43
Promote curriculum decisions that are responsive	<input type="checkbox"/> There is a plan for monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum that considers information about children’s learning and skill development.		NAEYC: 10.F.01, 10.F.02
	<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum decisions take into account the cultural backgrounds of the families served and the community in which the program reside.		NAEYC: 2.A.04, 7.A.09 ECERS-R: 28 Head Start Performance Standard: 1304.21(a)1
	Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plans for professional development related to curriculum are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o aligned with program goals, current best practices and research. o based upon the individual needs of teachers o considerate of the needs of children and families. 		NAEYC: 2.A.04, 10.E.12 ECERS-R: 38, 43
Promote reflection as a valuable practice in making curriculum decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers have time to reflect upon classroom implementation of curriculum on a regular basis <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers have time to collaborate with other early childhood professionals on a regular basis. <input type="checkbox"/> There is a process for teachers to provide feedback on curriculum. 		NAEYC: 10.A.07, 3.G.02, 4.D.04 ECERS-R: 41-43

Curriculum Document	Indicators of Quality	Comment/Next Steps	Alignment to program accreditation, evaluation and improvement tools
<p>*Note: The following components are considered important to include when planning or reviewing early childhood curricula. Whether the individual components appear as part of a broader yearly plan or as part of an ongoing weekly/daily planning process may vary from one program to another. For example, written documents may articulate a yearly plan for addressing all standards with sample teaching strategies, leaving most of the planning for specific learning experiences to individual teacher plans. Other programs may rely more heavily on a curriculum document that includes plans for specific learning experiences, allowing teachers to focus their time on making adjustments to incorporate child interest and meeting the unique learning needs of a particular group. Despite these variations as to whether these components appear as part of the ongoing planning process or as part of a larger curriculum document, the essential components to promote intentionality remain the same.</p>			
<p>Curriculum document(s) include components that promote intentionality.</p>	<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Written documents address the basic components of an early childhood classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Materials reflect a balance between open-ended and problem solving materials, familiar and novel items, and materials that promote both social and individual learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Written documents address research-based principles for the arrangement of classroom space and learning centers. <input type="checkbox"/> Written documents address how the components of an early childhood classroom may be adjusted based on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ child interest ○ individual children’s needs ○ the learning standards to be addressed 		<p>NAEYC: 2.A.02, 2.A.08, 3.A.04, 3.B.02, 3.E.08, 9.A.04 ECERS-R: 1-5, 15, 19-27, 37 CLASS: Regard for Student Perspectives, Productivity, Instructional Learning Formats: variety of modalities and materials, Head Start Performance Standard: 1304.21a)1</p>
	<p>Learning Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reflect a balance of teacher-led and child-initiated experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Are relevant to children’s lives and cultural context <input type="checkbox"/> Occur in the context of various groupings (individual, small group, large group) <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate child interest 		<p>NAEYC: 2.A.10, 3.B.01, 3.D.10,3.E.03, 3.E.08, 3.G.05 ECERS-R: 28, 34, 36 CLASS: Regard for Student Perspective, Instructional Learning Forms: Varieties of modalities and materials and Student interest ; Concept Development: Integration and Connections to the real world</p>

11/12/2010

Curriculum Document	Indicators of Quality	Comment/Next Steps	Alignment to program accreditation, evaluation and improvement tools
	<p>Scheduling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Written documents address the basic components and requirements of the daily schedule<input type="checkbox"/> Children have ample time for making choices, extending play, and continuing projects over time<input type="checkbox"/> Plans exist for transitions from one activity or area to another		<p>NAEYC: 2.A.07, 2.A.11, 3.D.03, 3.D.09, 3.E. 02 ECERS-R: 34,35,36 CLASS: Regard for Student Perspectives, Productivity: Maximizing Learning time, Transitions, Routines</p>
	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Resources for teachers are provided, including<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Research base for standards, assessments, teaching strategies and/or learning experiences.○ Suggested materials○ Related readings		<p>NAEYC: 10.C.03 ECERS-R: 43</p>
	<p>Integrated Curricular Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Learning experiences incorporate skills across multiple domains of development<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Personal-Social○ Cognitive<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Language and Literacy▪ Logical-Mathematical/Scientific Thinking○ Physical○ Creative and Aesthetic<input type="checkbox"/> Learning centers incorporate materials and experiences that promote skill development across multiple domains of development (e.g. writing implements are available in dramatic play and block centers, three dimensional geometric shapes are used in the sensory table).		<p>NAEYC: 2.A.10, 2.A.12 ECERS-R: 15, 19-27 CLASS: Instructional Learning Formats: Variety of modalities and materials Concept Development: Integration Language Modeling: Advanced language</p>

Curriculum Document	Indicators of Quality	Comment/Next Steps	Alignment to program accreditation, evaluation and improvement tools
	<p>Planning Written documents clearly articulate the following components in learning plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Standards addressed by learning experiences<ul style="list-style-type: none">The learning standards addressed are the state standards or are aligned to state standardsTeachers are intentional in their selection of standards, based upon the unique needs of individuals and groups of children.<input type="checkbox"/> Description of the learning experience<ul style="list-style-type: none">Setting and grouping of childrenMaterialsWays in which materials may be changed or modified to accommodate the needs of individual children.<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching strategies, including teacher behaviors (e.g. modeling, questioning) are intentionally planned to address:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Varying skill levels based upon classroom assessment dataAdditional support in mastering specific skillsSpecial needs, including those addressed by IEPs.Dual Language or English Language LearnersIndividualized strategies for children of differing abilities, needs and/or learning styles<input type="checkbox"/> Plan for assessment of skills and/or knowledge<ul style="list-style-type: none">Plans include specific learning standards to be observed during learning experiences.Plans include a variety of methods for observing, documenting, and evaluating the development and learning of individual children.		<p>NAEYC: 2.A.02, 2.A.05, 2.A.06, 3.E.02, 3.E.04, 3.F.06, 3.G.01, 4.C.03, 4.D.03 ECERS-R: 37, 38, 41 CLASS: Concept Development, Instructional Learning Format: Clarity of learning objectives, Variety of modalities and materials, Quality of Feedback, Language Modeling Head Start Performance Standard: 1204.21(a)2, 1304.21(a)1, 1304.20(f)(2), 1308.19,</p>

Curriculum Document	Indicators of Quality	Comment/Next Steps	Alignment
	<p>Planning (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Roles of adults<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Implementing planned learning experiences○ Facilitation of learning during child initiated play experiences○ Observing and documenting○ Preparing materials and/or cleaning up<input type="checkbox"/> Guidance for family involvement<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Plans include options for family involvement in sharing observations, planning classroom curriculum and assisting with implementation of learning experiences		
The curriculum document includes components that promote responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Written documents articulate how the following components will be incorporated into the curriculum:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Child interest○ Family input○ Cultural contexts of individuals and specific groups of children and their families○ Assessment information		<p>NAEYC: 4.A.03 ECERS-R: 38 CLASS: Regard for Student Perspectives: , Concept Development: Integration and Connections to the real world</p>
The curriculum document includes components that promote reflection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Children have opportunities to reflect upon previous learning and experiences and to anticipate and plan new directions in their play and learning.		<p>CLASS: Regard for Student Perspectives: Student expression</p>

**Early Learning and Development Standards, Birth through Grade 3:
Guidance for Principal's and Public School Leaders**

Early Childhood, it's not just preschool!

The developmental period between preschool and third grade is unique (Copple, Bredekamp, & National Association for the Education of Young Children., 2009). Children develop skills in the area of self-regulation, representational thought, and memory during this period.

An effective principal needs to understand the importance of learning standards (what children should know and be able to do) as the foundation for developmentally effective instruction. Early learning and development standards are the cornerstone for creating high-quality pathways for children from birth through grade 12.

The Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) delineate a developmental continuum of what young children from birth through the end of their fifth year should know and be able to do. These birth through age five child standards address the domains of (domain graphic on reverse side):

- Cognition
- Science
- Mathematics
- Social & Emotional Development
- Social Studies
- Creative Arts
- Physical Well-Being
- Language & Literacy

In order to best support young children's learning it is important to know that young children are capable and competent learners. Although each child's growth and development is unique, all children learn best when their basic needs are met. Families continue to be children's primary teachers and are critical partners whom schools and communities must engage meaningfully in their children's education. Schools and programs must address diverse populations of children by providing meaningful inclusive experiences for young children with disabilities, and by providing opportunities for children to benefit from diversity. Family context and culture provides a strong foundation for learning and young children's primary language development should be supported, even if they are beginning to learn a second language. Young children require learning experiences that involve active exploration and that are relevant and integrated across ALL domains of development. All domains of development are important and inter-reliant, and one domain should not be stressed to the detriment of another. It is important to educate the whole child, not merely address individual domains.

ELDS: What They Can Do For Your School

- The ELDS can be used as a tool to build communication and common language between community early learning programs and public schools;
- The child standards in the ELDS can help to develop Individual Education Programs (IEPS), including goals and objectives for children in lower elementary grades who have developmental concerns;
- The ELDS will assist in the creation of pathways from PreK to K when kindergarten and prekindergarten teachers share common understanding of child expectations and use this information to develop developmentally effective instruction; and
- The ELDS as the foundation for developmentally effective instruction will afford young children the opportunity to enter kindergarten with the fundamentals they need to be successful.

Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Dissemination

Needs Assessment Report

DRAFT

Developed for:

**The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet and the
Connecticut State Department of Education**

By

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Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Dissemination Needs Assessment Report

Executive Summary

Overview: The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet is poised to release newly developed Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CTELDS) for children from birth to age 5. These learning standards were developed as a result of a comprehensive process including a number of alignment studies and activities. In preparation for the release of the new CTELDS, Dr. Mhora Lorentson, Director of the Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CCESC) at EDUCATION CONNECTION, completed a needs assessment for the CTELDS dissemination process.

Description: Needs assessment activities were completed from November, 2012 to April, 2013 and were designed to enhance understanding of the perceptions of CTELDS held by stakeholders and to identify the educational and communication needs of stakeholder groups related to implementation of the new CTELDS. Data collection activities were developed and data collected to initiate the needs assessment process. The needs assessment addressed the following questions:

Question 1: What are the current understandings held by families, home- based providers, early care and education providers and professionals of the value, purpose and need for the CTELDS?

Question 2: How can we best reach families, home- based providers, early care and education providers and professionals during the CTELDS dissemination process?

Data Collection Methods and Activities: Data collection methods included 35 qualitative focus group and individual interviews with families, home- based providers, early care and education providers and professionals involved with the 0-5 age population and the use of an on-line survey instrument.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Data collection provided conclusions and recommendations for the consideration of the CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet and the CSDE. Conclusions are presented below by needs assessment question.

Question 1: What are the current understandings held by families, home-based providers, early care and education providers and professionals of the value, purpose and need for the CTELDS?

Results from qualitative focus groups were supported by the results of the on-line survey and indicate overwhelmingly that families, home and center-based providers and representatives of other professional groups generally have some information and familiarity with the value, purpose, need for and impact of CTELDS. However, the degree to which stakeholders are knowledgeable about and able to use the CTELDS varies both within and across groups with a large number of individuals expressing no or limited knowledge about the CTELDS or how to use them. Overall, respondents stated that “when individuals understand the use and purpose of learning standards, they are generally perceived as important” with the understanding that the a large number of stakeholders do not currently have a sufficient understanding of the role, meaning, purpose and need for learning standards.

Additionally, a wide range of perceptions of and reactions to the use of standards were described by focus group respondents with many of these perceptions described as acting as potential barriers to the use of CTELDS. Barriers to the use of CTELDS were identified including fear, misperceptions of the role and purpose of CTELDS, varied and unclear definitions of the words “learning *standard*”, varied educational levels across stakeholders, financial restrictions, a lack of materials for implementation of educational activities related to the use of CTELDS, and lack of time for learning and implementation of the CTELDS.

Question 2: How can we best reach families, home-based providers, early care and education providers and professionals during the CTELDS dissemination process?

Survey and focus group respondents provided a number of suggestions and potential strategies to reach stakeholders throughout the dissemination process. These included development of a clear definition of the CTELDS, use of examples, clear and simple language, provision of trainings within a mixed or team-based setting, involvement of representatives of key stakeholder groups to facilitate “buy-in”, use of a variety of formats and processes for communication, clear illustration of the connections between new CTELDS and existing standards, consistent technical support, well-coordinated and monitored consultants and/or local/regional contact people, concrete strategies for implementing and assessing, and working with existing networks of providers to provide training, support, communication and evaluation at ongoing meetings.

Information was described as needing to be shared in a variety of formats. Ideas provided included the use of hard copy documents, charts and graphs, interactive web sites, e-mails with brief updates, bulletin boards, blogs, television clips, the use of Facebook or other social media, the use of “apps” to share or use information, and the use of on-line chats, networking or conferencing. Regardless of format used, the need for brevity and specificity, and the use various options, ongoing communication and clarity of information were consistently emphasized.

Ongoing interaction and communication with state agency representatives was considered critical by respondents. Options provided included state consultant or evaluator attendance at ongoing meetings to share information, obtain feedback and address questions; the use of surveys and/or focus groups on a regular basis, and ongoing assessment of the implementation process through reconnections with needs assessment participants and examination of progress made in key areas.

Participants also provided a number of recommendations for the consideration of the CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet and the CSDE as follows:

- Develop and communicate clear and consistent expectations regarding the implementation, purpose and use of the CTELDS. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of including expectations on timeline, use on a day-to-day basis, alignment and integration with existing standards, expected outcomes, required materials, expected resources and assessments.
- Develop clear and simple descriptions of the standards for sharing throughout the school community. It was recommended that these descriptions be written in simple language to allow all stakeholders to easily comprehend the standards.
- Develop and share cross-walks of the CTELDS to existing standards for each domain and age band.
- Provide professional development in conjunction with coaching, mentoring, technical assistance and provision of on-line or hard copy documents and training modules in a variety of formats to assist stakeholders to develop a bridge between standards and day-to-day practice. Provide standards awareness workshops and community forums to stakeholders throughout Connecticut to ensure a general understanding of the implementation process.
- Disseminate information in a wide range of formats and through a wide variety of venues in a consistent and ongoing manner.
- Implement ongoing communication and evaluation strategies to promote discussion of CTELDS and ensure consistent feedback between stakeholders and state agency representatives.
- Ensure that adequate materials are available for stakeholders to allow the integration of the CTELDS.
- Provide opportunities for teachers, parents, administrators and professionals from various stakeholder groups to interact and collaborate to facilitate communication and a consistent approach to implementation across all grade levels.
- Provide instructional materials necessary to support stakeholders in the implementation of the CTELDS.

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Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Dissemination Needs Assessment Report

Introduction

The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet is poised to release newly developed Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CTELDS) for children from birth to age 5. These standards were developed as a result of a comprehensive process including a number of alignment studies and activities. Subsequent to the alignment and gap analysis studies, revised and upgraded standards were developed through a multi-step process utilizing local expertise. The revised standards are currently undergoing a content validation study coordinated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This study is expected to be completed by Fall of 2013, with the release of the new CTELDS to follow.

In preparation for the release of the new CTELDS, Dr. Mhora Lorentson, Director of the Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CCESC) at EDUCATION CONNECTION, was contracted to conduct a CTELDS dissemination needs assessment process. Overall needs assessment activities were designed to provide insight into the needs of families, home and center-based providers, and professionals working with children ages 0-5, to increase stakeholder awareness of the new CTELDS, and to identify recommendations for the development of educational materials and dissemination processes that will effectively meet the needs of each stakeholder group.

Importance of Early Learning and Development Standards

Early learning and development standards are statements about what children from birth to age five should know and be able to do at various ages across their earliest years of development. Early learning standards serve as guides for supporting children's growth and development over time, helping to determine learning trajectories, plan experiences and provide developmental and educational support through the early childhood years.

Specifying what young children are expected to know and be able to do is widely recognized as a critical component of an effective education system. Equally important is that these expectations are aligned from one year to the next, from birth to age 18.

As part of Connecticut's 2009 application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for Head Start State Advisory Councils, Early Learning Standards were identified as a priority area. The goal for this priority area was: By September, 2013, Connecticut will adopt comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards that reflect a progression of skills from birth to age five, aligned with kindergarten through grade 12 standards.

Since 2010, the Governor's Early Childhood Education Cabinet, in partnership with the Connecticut State Department of Education, has devoted significant fiscal and human resources to the creation of rigorous and developmentally appropriate Early Learning and Development standards. It is expected that these standards will serve as a foundation for supporting all Connecticut children, in all settings, across the early childhood years.

Connecticut Early Learning Standards Development Process

Connecticut's Early Childhood Education Cabinet's Early Learning Standards workgroup conducted a multi-step process to develop the new CTELDS while simultaneously informing and engaging early childhood stakeholders. Process components included:

- 1) A thorough review of background information and decision-making regarding structure, format and guiding principles.
- 2) Identification of the current alignment and gaps between existing state and federal standards.
- 3) Development of draft CTELDS through cross-sector work based upon the alignment and gap analysis studies and current research.

- 4) Completion of a needs assessment to identify strategies for dissemination and implementation of the new CTELDS and inform CSDE planning for rollout, transition support, new resources and system. That process is complete and is summarized within this report.

As of the writing of this report, steps 1-4 are complete. Subsequent to development of the CTELDS and completion of a needs assessment, it was expected that the following steps would be undertaken:

- 5) Completion of a content validation study of the draft CTELDS. This study is currently underway.
- 6) Development of guidance materials and dissemination processes based on the results of the needs assessment. This process is currently underway.
- 7) Implementation of professional development to begin to support the use of the revised standards when these standards are released. This process is expected to begin during Fall, 2013.

A detailed description of activities completed to date is provided below.

Step 1-Planning

On June 22, 2011, the Early Learning Standards workgroup met to begin to plan the CTELDS development process and was designed to ensure wide cross-sector input. The workgroup included representatives from the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet, the CSDE, Head Start, higher education, early intervention services, Regional Education Service Centers, home care provider networks, public schools and the local chapter of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Throughout the development process, the workgroup was guided by the following two documents:

- The Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE): Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success.
- Early Learning Guidelines Resource: Recommendations and Issues for Consideration When Writing or Revising Early Learning Guidelines (Scott-Little, Kagan & Frelow, 2010)

In addition, the Early Learning Standards workgroup reviewed current Connecticut documents and other state, national and international sets of early learning standards. Subsequent to this review, the group defined the guiding principles, age ranges and groupings, domains and subject areas and the overall structure of the desired standards.

Step 2-Alignment and Gap Analysis Studies

In order to ease the transition to new CTELDS and to capitalize on previous investments and resources, the Early Learning Standards workgroup conducted a thorough alignment process to fully draw upon existing standards documents. The determination of appropriate alignments between existing learning standards and identification of gaps required a thorough review of documents often having very different structure and language. This process occurred through a series of steps involving a range of stakeholders. Specific processes used are described below:

- Common Core State Standards and the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework: Alignment between these two documents was thoroughly examined by CSDE consultants in partnership with outside experts in the area of mathematics and English language arts.
- CT Preschool Curriculum Framework and the Head Start Framework: Alignment between these two documents was examined through a collaborative process in which CSDE staff and the Connecticut Head Start Association rated the degree of matches found, completed a cross-check for agreement on the matches, and worked together to reconcile discrepancies. Results of this work are summarized in the report Head Start Crosswalks (2012).
- Alignment Between Preschool Curriculum Framework, the Kindergarten Science Curriculum Standards, the Kindergarten Social Studies Curriculum Framework and standards for younger children: SRI International completed a comprehensive study aligning these four documents. This study resulted in a full report entitled, "Connecticut Standards Alignment: Preschool Curriculum Framework, Kindergarten

Science Curriculum Standards, and Kindergarten Social Studies Curriculum Framework Final Report” and dated May 30, 2012.

Step 3--Development of Comprehensive and Initial Draft

On June 25 and 26, 2012, groups of experts in each of the identified domains, were gathered to create a first draft based upon the structure outlined by the CTEDLS workgroup. Each group utilized the information from the alignment and gap analysis studies, additional resources and research such as additional state standards or national standards and research, and crafted an initial draft of new birth to five standards across 7 age bands.

Step 4- Review and Revision Process

- **Expert Review:** During July and August, 2012 experts in early childhood care and education reviewed the draft CTEDLS according to one of the following perspectives:
 - Domain-specific feedback such as:
 - Breadth, depth and relative difficulty of skills addressed
 - Age appropriateness of the indicators
 - Placement of the indicators within the domain
 - Wording of the indicators
 - Cultural relevancy of the indicators for diverse populations
 - Appropriateness of the indicators for children who are dual language learners
 - Appropriateness of the indicators for children with special needs
- **Final Revision:** CSDE Early Childhood Consultants, in partnership with EASTCONN, a Regional Educational Service Center, synthesized input and made revisions based upon the expert input.

Step 5- Content Validation Study

In line with practices set forth by Scott-Little, Kagan & Frelow (2010), Requests for Proposals were issued for a Content Validation Study and an Age Validation Study. The CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet contracted with NAEYC to complete a content validation study. The content validation process will determine if the skills, knowledge and dispositions in the new CTEDLS reflect critical, comprehensive goals and a continuum of growth and development. This study is currently underway with expected completion in the fall of 2013.

The review of proposals for the age validation study resulted in a recognition that additional funding would be necessary to support a methodologically sound research project. A prospectus has been developed to solicit potential philanthropic and foundation support.

Needs Assessment Summary

Overview: Needs assessment activities were completed from November, 2012 to April, 2013 and were designed to enhance understanding of the perceptions of CTEDLS held by stakeholders and to identify the educational and communication needs of stakeholder groups related to implementation of the new CTEDLS. Data collection activities were developed and data collected to initiate the needs assessment process.

Needs Assessment Questions: The needs assessment addressed the following questions:

Question 1: What are the current understandings held by families, home- based providers, early care and education providers and professionals of the value, purpose and need for the CTEDLS?

Question 2: How can we best reach families, home- based providers, early care and education providers and professionals during the CTEDLS dissemination process?

Data Collection Methods and Activities: Data collection methods included qualitative focus groups and individual interviews with families, home- based providers, early care and education providers and professionals involved with the 0-5 age population and the use of an on-line survey instrument.

Methodology: The collection of high quality needs assessment data from a diverse group of stakeholders throughout Connecticut requires the identification of key target audiences, the development of strategies to reach each audience, and the collection of data using instruments and data collection methods designed to meet the needs of each audience. This report summarizes strategies used to identify and reach appropriate audiences and design appropriate tools and the results of data collection activities. The needs assessment activities included:

- A. An initial focus group interview and audience identification exercise held with leaders of early childhood programs throughout Connecticut;
- B. Development of a comprehensive data collection plan
- C. Thirty two focus group interviews and three individual interviews with representatives of key stakeholder groups; and
- D. Development and administration of the “Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Dissemination Stakeholder Input Survey” in both English and Spanish.

Instrumentation and Data Collection: The instrument development and data collection process is discussed below for each component of the methodology including audience identification and survey and focus group development and administration.

- A. **Initial Focus Group Interview and Audience Identification:** Initial focus group interview questions for Connecticut program leaders in the field of early childhood were developed linked to needs assessment goals and objectives and were designed to identify perceptions of CTEDLS held by families, center- and home-based providers and professionals throughout Connecticut and initial recommendations as to how to best reach these groups during the needs assessment process. Questions addressed areas including identification of the key educator, provider, family and professional groups involved in early childhood that needed to be reached, perceptions of the value, meaning, purpose, relevance and impact of learning standards, barriers faced to the use of learning standards, strategies to engage stakeholders around the CTEDLS, information needed by stakeholders to use the CTEDLS, appropriate formats to use for CTEDLS standard dissemination, and types of guidance, support, tools and communication mechanisms that could be used to encourage ongoing interaction and conversation through the implementation process. Questions were reviewed by CSDE Early Childhood Consultants prior to completion of the initial focus group.

The initial focus group was conducted on December 10, 2012 and was facilitated by Dr. Mhora Lorentson. The focus group interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Approximately 20 leaders in early childhood participated including CSDE consultants, program leads from Head Start and regional educational service centers (RESCs), physicians and representatives of family resource centers and United Way. Questions were incorporated into PowerPoint and projected. Responses were taped and transcribed.

Subsequent to the initial focus group, participants divided into subgroups to address questions related to how best to reach representatives from families, home- and center-based providers, and professionals throughout the needs assessment process. Each of four groups of participants selected one of the four key target audience groups and spent approximately 30 minutes to identify strategies that could be used to identify a representative group of stakeholders to address the needs assessment questions, to identify particular subgroups or subcategories of stakeholders that needed to be included, to identify key challenges that might be faced when trying to reach these groups and to develop three recommended data collection or sampling strategies that could be used to obtain information from a representative sample within this group. Results were shared in whole group discussion and provided to Dr. Lorentson for analysis.

- B. **Development of Data Collection Plan:** Based on feedback provided by the initial focus group and subsequent working sessions, an initial data collection plan was developed. Data collection was designed to ensure appropriate representation from the four key groups of early childhood stakeholders identified in

the initial focus group and working session (family members, home-based providers, center-based providers and other professionals working with the 0-5 age group) throughout Connecticut.

Data collection activities were expected to include one interview with one representative of each of the four key stakeholder groups in each of the six RESC regions (total of 24 expected interviews) and two focus groups with representatives of each group (total of 8 expected focus groups) throughout the state. In addition, two surveys were expected to be developed and distributed to stakeholders.

The RESCs and the counties in which they provide services are described below:

Table 1: Regional Educational Service Center Coverage Areas

Regional Educational Service Center	Primary Coverage Area
ACES	South Central Connecticut/New Haven and Middlesex Counties
CES	Southwest Connecticut/Fairfield County
CREC	North Central Connecticut/Capitol Region (Hartford County)
EASTCONN	Northeast Connecticut/Windham and Tolland Counties
EDUCATION CONNECTION	Northwest and Western Connecticut/Litchfield County
LEARN	Southeast Connecticut/New London County

The data collection process was designed to include initial contacts with the Early Childhood Program Manager in each RESC and with early childhood leads identified during the initial focus group. It was expected that these initial contacts would support the identification of appropriate audiences throughout Connecticut to complete the desired 8 focus groups and 24 interviews (4 in each RESC region). It was also expected that, as the data collection unfolded and contacts were made, the data collection activities might change to adapt to opportunities and challenges which arose. Overall, the key data collection goal was to obtain the maximum input of all key potential stakeholders throughout Connecticut in the most efficient, effective and appropriate means possible.

As the data collection activities were implemented, the enthusiasm of the individuals being contacted and their interest in being involved in the data collection process resulted in data collection methods being altered to obtain greater input and maximize feedback, primarily through the completion of focus groups instead of interviews. Thirty two focus groups and 3 individual interviews were held statewide.

C. Focus Groups and Interviews:

Focus group interview questions used during the initial focus group were modified as a result of feedback provided and used to obtain feedback for interviews and focus groups conducted throughout the state.

Individual and focus group interviews were conducted between the months of January and April, 2013 and were facilitated by Dr. Mhora Lorentson. Each focus group interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Each interview lasted approximately 25 minutes. The number of focus group participants ranged from 5 to over 50 in a group. Questions were incorporated into PowerPoint and projected for participants to see when appropriate. Focus group responses were taped and transcribed. A list of attendees for each focus group was obtained when possible. Interviews were not taped. Notes were taken by the interviewer throughout the process.

D. Early Learning and Development Standard Dissemination Stakeholder Input Survey

The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Dissemination Stakeholder Input Survey was developed during Spring, 2013. Survey items were drafted to assess the understanding of the meaning, purpose and value and impact of early learning standards, desired strategies to obtain information and key

demographic information including stakeholder group, Connecticut county in which the respondent lives or works, location on the urban, suburban and rural continuum, educational level and race/ethnicity.

Survey validity is maximized when the survey addresses all key concepts related to the issue being addressed and when the conceptual framework is reviewed by a panel of experts to ensure that no key concept was missed. Validity was maximized in this activity by the development of questions linked to the needs assessment goals and objectives and recommendations provided during the initial focus group and work group session and by the review of all survey categories and questions by CSDE staff. Survey validity is expected to be sufficient.

Reliability is maximized by the development of questions using nationally accepted standards and developed at a literacy level appropriate to the literacy level of the target population. Survey items were developed using these guidelines and were reviewed by CCESC, CSDE and Connecticut Info-line (2-1-1) Early Childhood staff prior to administration. No statistical checks of reliability or validity were conducted.

The survey was translated into Spanish by the CSDE. Both the English and the Spanish versions were incorporated into Survey Monkey and administered online through a variety of venues including:

- Incorporation into the Connecticut Infoline 2-1-1 Early Childhood website
- Incorporation into Connecticut's Early Childhood Education Cabinet website
- On-line distribution to key stakeholder groups throughout Connecticut including:
 - Connecticut Head Start Association
 - Connecticut Cares: A network of home-based providers
 - Special education teachers and/or directors involved with Early Childhood
 - The Connecticut Branch of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
 - The Connecticut Association of Pediatricians
 - Elementary School Principals involved with Early Childhood
 - Kith and Kin
 - School Readiness Liaisons
 - Child Daycare Contracted Providers
 - The Connecticut Association of School Nurses
 - Connecticut Info-line contacts
 - The Early Childhood Program Manager in each RESC region

A representative of each group was asked to share the survey with their contacts as appropriate. Additionally, the survey was sent to each individual with whom an interview or focus group was conducted or organized. These individuals were also asked to share with their contacts as appropriate.

The survey was incorporated into the 2-1-1 and Early Childhood Cabinet websites in early March and distributed to stakeholder groups in an ongoing fashion. Survey data collection ended on May 10, 2013.

Data Analysis: Conceptual analysis of responses was used to analyze focus group interview results. Survey results were analyzed using SPSS, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Frequencies, means, and totals were obtained as appropriate.

Participant Demographics:

Demographic information for stakeholder groups participating in focus groups or interviews is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Focus Group and Interview Participant Demographics

Target Region									
Stakeholder Group	Subgroup	ACES	CES	CREC	EAST CONN	EDUCATION CONNECTION	LEARN	Non-RESC Specific Audience	Total
Families		6	6	20	5	6	6		49
Home-Based Providers		30	20			4		12	66
Early Care and Education Center-Based Providers	Head Start				18			50	68
	Principals							6	6
	Others (Mixed Groups)		15	40	20	2			77
Other Professionals	Pediatricians							11	11
	Nurse Practitioners							1	1
	Nurses							30	30
	Department of Children and Families						25		25
	Birth to Three			20			8		28
	Behavioral Health Specialists					1		1	2
	Special Education Teachers							24	24
	Two- and Four-Year College Faculty							7	7
	Others (Mixed Groups)	20					8		28
Total		56	41	80	43	13	47	142	422

Note: Efforts were made to obtain accurate attendance records at each focus group. However, the receipt of accurate attendance records allowing the appropriate identification of represented groups or subgroups was not always possible. Table 2 provides the most accurate demographic information possible given data obtained.

Results

Results are described for each data collection method used.

A. Focus Group/Individual Interviews:

“People will need a lot of education and training to really use and understand the CTELDS. Want to make sure they are seen as a guide—not a rigid measure. As they are implemented, someone should be going out and meeting with whole practices and groups of people—teach people how to use them.”

--A clinical psychologist--

“Nurse practitioners are not familiar with the term ‘learning standards’. If they don’t understand the term, and it hasn’t been shared with them, it is not meaningful. The term needs to be well defined.”

--A nurse practitioner—

“If you tell parents this is an assessment, and parents come to pediatricians and say ‘I am worried about my kid—he failed the assessment’, and the pediatrician says ‘we don’t think there is anything wrong’, this will be an issue. The pediatrician will say this is some BS the school is generating and I don’t agree with it. Then we are inadvertently doing harm to an excellent process that wasn’t ever really meant to be a screening process—it was meant to enhance the educational experiences of young children! So, it may be the best thing to say to pediatricians, ‘Hey guys, this is happening. This isn’t about you and your screening and your diagnosis. This is about improving educational communication.’”

--A pediatrician—

“I think a barrier to the use of the CTELDS is to make sure that educators are trained appropriately. To understand how to implement the standards while still staying true to what we know is how young children learn and develop.”

--A center-based provider—

“One of the things I struggle with is the establishment of learning standards that somehow imply students will achieve at higher levels. The issue is developmental readiness. We are academizing—whatever the word is—a process that takes developmental steps to get to. And having a learning standard means, ‘This is what they will reach’, as opposed to saying ‘Where’s the child now and what is developmentally appropriate and how will he/she get from point A to point B?’”

--A Head Start teacher—

“From a Birth to Three perspective, we really make sure this is explained to parents and is very parent friendly. The parents need to be supported to be able to use it! So much of our role is to educate parents—this could help us do it. Also, the chunks and age bands these standards span, like 24 to 36 months in one band, those are huge in our world—really need smaller chunks. And to avoid confusing parents, we need to be very clear as to how these learning standards link to current Birth to Three standards—we don’t want to confuse a complex process for a family.”

--A Birth to Three provider--

“I have to admit that I am on both sides of the fence here. I am an educator and a parent of a child with special needs. The CTELDS will be affecting both my children—very intense. I find learning standards to be kind of overwhelming—an ungodly amount of time and effort into planning and understanding—even for me they are difficult. For a parent who is not an educator—they have to be simple and very clearly worded! User friendly.”

--A parent—

"I think learning standards are really important—I know for myself, I have my own children. I have a two and half year old and I compare kids to my own child and can see big differences. But then I have to remember, there are a lot of kids in the 0 to five age group, that we deal with. We are often finding deficiencies and needs. Anything that helps us do that is great. I think they are really important."

--A Department of Children and Families staff member--

"Honestly, right now I don't know if learning standards are used. And sometimes, even though they say you should not be using them to formulate your IEP goals, they are sometimes used that way. It is kind of an unfair benchmark for some of these kids. We have to be careful that that's clearly not done. When they aren't being used, it is not because people don't value them, it is because they don't understand them."

--A special education teacher from an elementary school--

"Learning standards can provide the learning tools we need—even to inform the parents that we are at this level with your child—they serve as a learning tool for the provider and as a communication and learning tool for the parent. For home-based providers, using learning standards can also make us more professional—help us to separate the babysitters from the educators. That is important"

--A home-based provider--

"In the public schools, teachers' knowledge of learning standards varies by teacher. Larger districts, that generally have school readiness funding and community preschools as part of the district, we live and breathe learning standards and are really embracing the changes. But often, in the smaller more suburban communities I have worked in, it is a kind of struggle to get everyone to the table—get people to understand. There is a lot of variability also in community preschools and care centers."

--An elementary principal--

"I think that there are a lot of people that think of learning standards in terms of jumping through hoops and not meaningful. But that is because they don't really understand or maybe the leadership they are working under doesn't really get it. It needs to be integrated into the whole concept of using learning standards to guide teaching and learning. Overall, to use a humorous metaphor, I would say that higher education for the most part has "drunk the Kool-aid" and we all now believe in the authenticity and value of learning standards, but many of the centers have not drunk the Kool-aid yet. Going through the alignment process was challenging but very worthwhile! The cross-walking helped us understand that it is possible to integrate and effectively meet criteria set by different learning standards."

--A faculty member in a two or four year college--

Between December, 2012 and May 1, 2013 32 focus group interviews and 3 individual interviews were held with center-based providers, home-based providers, family members and representatives from "other professional groups" involved with children aged zero to five. Key findings are summarized below. Comparisons to results by group are provided when appropriate.

1. Value, Meaning, Purpose and Impact of CTELDs:

Participants generally stated that Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CTELDS) were perceived to be very important to young children when individuals understood the meaning and purpose of the learning standards. Learning standards were generally described as helping parents, educators and professionals to be aware of what children are doing and of progress and expectations and to have the ability to help parents, professionals and educators to identify issues, guide educational and developmental activities, support a child's progress, and improve communication.

However, the majority of participants also stated that the meaning, purpose and impact of CTELDS were generally not clear to stakeholders. As one individual stated, “Most people are clueless unless directly involved in the curriculum work—if people understood them, they would think they were important. Most people think they are really regimented and used to create standardization across groups.” Another individual mentioned that “There are 1300 centers in Connecticut—there is a lot of variation within that.”

Overall, center- and district-based educators were described as more likely to understand how to use and work with CTELDS than individuals within home-based centers, families or other professional groups. However, within each group a wide range of understanding and ability to use standards was consistently described.

This range of understanding and ability was generally attributed to a lack of exposure to the use of learning standards, a lack of education around the use of learning standards, unclear and varied definitions of the words “learning standard”, and the existence of a wide range of differing “standards” related to early childhood. Specifically, Birth to Three providers described themselves as using one set of standards, Head Start providers another, pediatricians another, and center-based standards still others. Additionally, the standards used within each group of individuals, for instance center-based providers, were described as varied and inconsistent. The range and variation among existing standards was described as leading to a confusion and tension within the field.

Fear was frequently mentioned as “a first reaction to learning standards—*something they can’t meet*—Testing.” This reaction was often described as particularly strong for parents. The strength of the parent’s reaction was often attributed to feelings of “guilt” or “inadequacy” in cases in which parents don’t understand the learning standards or their children don’t “measure up” to a particular learning standard. Other negative reactions mentioned by participants included a perception that a learning standard is a rigid measure or guide, used to judge or label children, or that these are just “educator hoops to jump through” and not relevant to families, other professionals, or home-based providers. However, these reactions were consistently attributed to a lack of understanding about the learning standards. Participants emphasized the need for education, communication and support to overcome these reactions.

2. **Barriers Faced to the Use of CTELDS:**

Respondents described a number of barriers that they perceived to hinder the ability of stakeholders to use and work with the CTELDS. The negative perceptions described above were described as existing barriers for all stakeholder groups. Additionally financial restrictions and a lack of time to learn to understand and use any new material were described as common barriers by all respondents. A major barrier facing families, home- and center-based providers specifically was described as a lack of appropriate educational materials and knowledge needed to implement any intervention designed to move a child forward along the developmental continuum. Additional barriers faced varied by stakeholder group and are summarized below.

- **Family Members:** Family members described barriers to use of learning standards including varied and frequently limited educational level of parents, time constraints faced by working families and the complex demands of an active home life, complexity of material provided, language barriers faced by non-English speaking families, a lack of access to information, a perception that “this is the *educator’s job, not mine*”, and a lack of transportation and materials necessary to attend educational sessions or implement activities.
- **Home-based Providers:** Home-based providers described time as a significant barrier to the use of learning standards. Specifically, each home-based provider was described as providing services to a range of children in a limited setting. Home-based providers described themselves as having no or limited ability to find substitutes needed to attend a workshop or professional development session due to licensing restrictions. The ability for one individual to address the needs of a number of children of varied ages without access to substitutes or support was described as a barrier.

Home-based providers described a fear that the implementation of CTEDLS would lead to a need to “go back to school and spend time and money” or “receive negative consequences.” These individuals emphasized that it would be important and welcome for them to attend a workshop or other time-limited event to obtain necessary knowledge and credentials but were concerned that, if they were going to be expected to spend a lot of time and money to be able to continue to provide for themselves and provide care to children, that would not be realistic. This fear was described as a major barrier faced to the participation of home-based providers.

Additionally, a lack of access to information was described as a significant barrier. Specifically, licensed home-based providers consistently stated that, although the “State” has their e-mail address, there is little or no e-mail information that is provided to them. These individuals also stated that the current licensing process does not require any educational knowledge or assessment on the part of the provider and therefore does not provide any incentive for providers to learn the information. Home-based providers also described themselves as having limited funding or ability to attend trainings or professional development that is not provided within their specific neighborhood or region.

Unlicensed providers were described as facing similar barriers although those barriers were described as being enhanced and augmented by their unlicensed status.

- Center-based Providers: The major barriers described by Center-based providers that were not emphasized as frequently by other groups included a lack of substitutes for early childhood teachers to allow them to attend necessary trainings, a lack of connection between the 0-5 education within a school setting and the learning standards and educational activities occurring from kindergarten through grade 12, an emphasis on the use of the Common Core standards in the K-12 system and a resulting lack of interest in anything that is not perceived as related to the Common Core, language barriers faced by staff and family members in multi-lingual settings, rapid turnover of staff leading to a continuous need for basic training for new staff, and a need for supportive and understanding administrators to provide long-term and active support for teachers to learn the information.
- Other Professionals: Respondents within this group were diverse and included pediatricians and nurse practitioners, Birth to Three consultants, representatives from the Department of Children and Families, two and four year college faculty, special education specialists within school districts, school nurses and nurse consultants, and elementary school principals. As can be expected, barriers described by these groups varied and are described briefly here.

Medical personnel including nurses, nurse practitioners and pediatricians expressed conflict and confusion between the role of the new CTEDLS and existing medical standards for children. Many of the nutrition standards were described as being currently integrated into pediatric primary care with some of the developmental and educational standards not being as thoroughly understood by the medical field.

These individuals expressed concerns related to the need to clearly understand the language used in the CTEDLS and how that relates to language in the current standards used by the American Academy of Pediatrics and taught to physicians and nurse practitioners in medical school. Additionally, these individuals expressed concerns with the time pressure put on pediatricians by insurance companies to have extremely rapid visits leading to little time or ability to share or discuss anything but key points with patients. These individuals stated that “When you talk about adding another piece to the extremely limited time, you need to understand the context—we have some real concerns in primary care—it *isn't delivered* well now—we *don't have the time now*—how can we add anything to that?”

Additionally, a number of medical personnel expressed the need to have involvement and trust between the medical field and educators to ensure that medical practitioners use the CTEDLS to their best ability. These individuals summarized their perception as “if you want pediatricians involved, you need to have information we trust and are familiar with, input from people we trust in the development of the standards—pediatricians or the American Academy of Pediatrics”. Without active medical involvement, a

number of respondents stated that medical practitioners may inadvertently hurt efforts on the part of early childhood educators to support and improve communication with the medical field by not understanding what CTELDS are intended to be and therefore not trying to incorporate CTELDS into their practice.

School nurses described a lack of involvement in the educational process and a perception of “nurses and nursing” as “less important” than education within a school setting as hindering their ability to learn about and use the CTELDS in productive and effective manner. These individuals stated that a consistent lack of nursing involvement in educational discussions and efforts within a school or district acts as a barrier to their ability to understand and use the CTELDS.

Birth to Three consultants and Department of Children and Families representatives also described barriers to the use of learning standards. Birth to Three representatives specifically described the large age bands used within the CTELDS as a barrier to their work. They described themselves as needing to examine development within very small “chunks” to accurately assess progress made by young children with disabilities. Additionally, these individuals described their primary responsibility as being the education of families. They emphasized that their ability to fulfill this task requires that the CTELDS be clear, concise and family-friendly to ensure their ability to work with families and involve them in CTELDS education and implementation. Home-visitors emphasized that, for families with children with disabilities, the barriers are complex and include the perceptions of the family about the family process, the child and how they perceive these CTELDS as fitting into that family, as well as whether they perceive themselves to be getting adequate support to be able to implement and work with the CTELDS. An additional barrier to the use of CTELDS raised by representatives from the Department of Children and Families was described as a lack of services available to families for whom an issue is identified.

3. **Strategies to Engage Audiences Around the CTELDS:**

Respondents provided a number of suggestions and potential strategies to engage audiences around the CTELDS. All audiences described the need to clearly define the CTELDS, provide examples of how to use the CTELDS in a variety of settings, to use clear and simple language in the development of CTELDS, to provide trainings and professional development activities within a mixed or team-based setting, to provide communication and information around the CTELDS using a variety of formats and strategies and in a consistent and ongoing fashion, and to clearly illustrate the connections and linkages between the new CTELDS and existing standards. Additionally, the importance of consistent technical support, the use of well-coordinated and monitored consultants and/or local/regional contact people, the presence of “one individual who can answer questions and provide ongoing support during implementation”, and the use of concrete strategies for implementing and assessing were emphasized by the majority of respondents. The importance of working with existing networks of providers to provide training, support, communication and evaluation at ongoing meetings was highlighted as an excellent strategy to support engagement by all stakeholder groups. A limited number of potential strategies differ by stakeholder group and are summarized below.

- **Family Members:** Engagement of family members was described as requiring an understanding on the part of family members of the importance of their role in the child’s development. Parents were described as generally very receptive when they understand why something is important to their child and to themselves. The need to highlight the importance and impact of each potential activity within the CTELDS was considered to be important to support family engagement. Additional strategies to engage family members were described as working with pediatricians and medical providers who were often the “*most trusted individual in a child’s life*”; to develop activities for parents and children to do together while learning and practicing the CTELDS; to provide childcare and food at activities which involve parents; to provide child care providers with ideas and models to support their ability to work with parents; and to provide materials to parents as a “positive incentive” for attending or coming to a training or educational event.

- **Home-based and Center-based Providers:** As with family members, engagement of providers was described as requiring a clear understanding of the importance of the CTElds with clear examples as to how to implement and use the CTElds in a day-to-day fashion. Engagement was described as being increased through the implementation of the notion of a “medical home” in which pediatricians and educators work together to implement the CTElds and work with parents; through the use of specific guidance in the implementation of the CTElds and specific activities within them; through the provision of incentives such as educational certifications, the receipt of materials or gift cards for attending and participating in the training; the incorporation of assessments related to the use of the CTElds in licensing and hiring practices; provision of substitute teachers for both home and center-based providers to support attendance at meetings; the provision of materials necessary for particular developmental or educational activities; and the use of mentors or coaches to provide support within the childcare setting.
- **Other Professionals:** The majority of individuals within this category described the need to ensure that the linkages between the CTElds and the standards or other assessment tools utilized within their areas were clearly described and communicated and that strategies to implement the CTElds strategies within their existing field were clearly and succinctly described. Additionally, the importance of ongoing stakeholder input into development and implementation of standards was considered critical.

4. **Information Needed by Audience to Facilitate Use of CTElds:**

Respondents provided a number of suggestions as to what information was needed by stakeholders to assist them to use and work with the CTElds. All audiences described the need to clearly define the goals, objectives and purpose of the CTElds, to provide specific information on what to expect from children at a particular stage with information on how to support growth at that point. Additional information frequently requested by respondents included information as to when to look for additional help for a child who might have delays and where to go to look for that support, ideas for activities to support development and learn specific skills, general information about development at different ages, specific examples of how to observe and document a child’s progress and specific examples of activities for helping a child develop the next appropriate stage of growth.

5. **Recommended Format of the CTElds and Communication/Information Sharing Processes to Support the CTElds.**

Respondents provided a number of suggestions as to the format and processes necessary to disseminate information to various audiences. Formats identified as important were consistently described as varied and not specific to any particular type of group. All respondents emphasized the need to consistently share information through a variety of formats and to, similarly, consistently provide opportunities for feedback. The importance of knowledgeable individuals or consultants attending existing meetings of stakeholders both to provide information and to obtain feedback was mentioned by the majority of respondents as critical. Additionally, the need for professional development activities followed by and supported by coaching, mentoring, technical assistance and “one person to answer questions” was considered extremely important. Individuals requested that either regional contacts be set up or one or two individuals be designated at a state level to provide support. The incorporation of CTElds education into the educational process for early childhood and medical personnel was described by stakeholders as critical to sustainability and long-term success. A number of individuals expressed the need to ensure that training and professional development were provided to teams of individuals from various stakeholder groups, such as parents, educators and nurses together, to facilitate ongoing communication, interaction and effective use of the CTElds in a variety of settings.

Information was described as needing to be shared in a variety of formats. Ideas provided included the use of hard copy documents, simple and vivid charts and graphs to use in child care or office settings, interactive web sites where one can choose the level of detail needed or choose whether to view standards according to age (i.e. one age band all standards) or by domain, e-mails with brief updates, bulletin boards, blogs, television clips, the use of Facebook or other social media, the use of “apps” to share or use information, and the use of on-line chats, networking or conferencing to communicate across groups of individuals. Regardless of the format used, the need

for brevity as well as specificity, the use of a variety of options, ongoing communication and clarity of information were consistently emphasized.

Ongoing interaction and communication with state representatives was considered critical by all respondents. Specific options provided included state consultant or evaluator attendance at ongoing meetings to share information, obtain feedback and address questions; the use of surveys and/or focus groups on a regular basis, and ongoing assessment of the implementation process through reconconnections with needs assessment participants and examination of progress made in key areas.

B. Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Dissemination Stakeholder Survey:

Demographic Information:

A total of 556 individuals completed the on-line survey with three of these respondents completing the Spanish language questionnaire. Of the 556 respondents, 53.3% or 237 respondents were early care and education providers in a center-based setting, 14.2% or 63 respondents were home-based providers of early childhood services, 26.1% or 116 individuals were other professionals and 6.5% or 29 respondents were parents or family members of a child age 0 to 5. There were 111 individuals who did not respond to this question.

Respondents provided the length of time they had been involved in early childhood education. The majority (63.6%) had been involved for more than 10 years, 16.7% for 6-10 years, 6.8% for 4-5 years, 8.5% for 2-3 years and 4.4% for one year or less.

Respondents lived or work in each of the eight Connecticut counties. Approximately one tenth (9.4%) of respondents were from Litchfield County, 18% from Hartford County, 22.8% from Fairfield County, 4.0% from Tolland County, 5.4% from Windham County, 32.2% from New Haven County, 3.2% from Middlesex County and 5.0% from New London County. Approximately one fifth (17.5%) were from rural areas, 41.8% represented urban areas and 40.7% represented suburban areas.

The majority of respondents (83.9%) were White, 6.1% were Hispanic, 9.0% were Black and 1.0% were Asian Americans.

Respondents had a wide range of educational experiences. Results are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Respondent Educational Background
Frequency and Percent**

	Frequency	Percent
Never completed high school	1	.2%
Completed high school but never went to college	13	2.6%
Attended a 2 or 4 year college but did not complete	42	8.4%
Completed a two year college degree not related to early childhood care and education	24	4.8%
Completed a two year college degree related to early childhood care and education	43	8.6%
Completed a four year college degree not related to early childhood care and education	38	7.6%
Completed a four year college degree related to early childhood care and education	110	22.0%
Completed a Master's degree related to early childhood care and education	143	28.7%
Completed a Master's degree not related to early childhood care and education	37	7.4%
Completed a post-graduate professional or doctoral degree related to early childhood care and education	35	7.0%
Completed a post-graduate professional or doctoral degree not related to early childhood care and education	13	2.6%

Results:

Participants rated their agreement with key statements expressing knowledge or awareness about the standards. Overall results are summarized in Table 4.

**Table 4: Participant Knowledge and Understanding
Percent and Mean**

	Strongly Disagree or Disagree (1 and 2)	Neither Disagree Nor Agree (3)	Agree or Strongly Agree (4 and 5)	Mean
1) I could explain to someone how to use learning standards to support children's development.	8.8%	9.9%	81.4%	4.0
2) I am familiar with at least some of the currently used early learning standards (i.e. CT's Infant and Toddler Guidelines, the Preschool Curriculum Framework, the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten).	6.6%	4.6%	88.8%	4.2
3) The purpose of standards is to support positive interactions between adults and children.	7.2%	18.7%	74.1%	3.9
4) I would like to know more about the new CTELDS.	2.8%	9.7%	87.5%	4.3
5) Learning about the new CTELDS would help me to support children's growth and development.	2.4%	9.9%	87.7%	4.3
6) The CTELDS are guidelines/benchmarks that can improve interactions with children.	2.4%	16.8%	80.8%	4.1
7) I want to be involved in discussing the new CTELDS.	9.1%	29.2%	61.7%	3.8
8) The CTELDS can help me keep track of children's growth.	3.2%	12.8%	84.0%	4.2
9) The meaning of the new CTELDS is clear to me.	17.9%	37.3%	44.7%	3.3

Overall, results indicate that respondents generally perceive themselves to be somewhat familiar with and interested in the new CTELDS. Respondents were least likely to agree that "The meaning of the new CTELDS is clear to me."

Results were also compared by stakeholder group. Mean responses for each group are below.

Table 5: Participant Knowledge and Understanding: Comparison by Stakeholder Group Mean Response

	Families (N=29)	Home- Based Providers (N=62)	Center- Based Providers (N=236)	Other Professionals (N=116)
1) I could explain to someone how to use learning standards to support children's development.	3.4	3.8	4.2	3.9
2) I am familiar with at least some of the currently used early learning standards (i.e. CT's Infant and Toddler Guidelines, the Preschool Curriculum Framework, the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten).	3.7	4.0	4.4	4.0
3) The purpose of standards is to support positive interactions between adults and children.	4.2	3.8	4.0	3.8
4) I would like to know more about the new CTELDs.	4.1	4.4	4.5	4.2
5) Learning about the new CTELDs would help me to support children's growth and development.	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.2
6) The CTELDs are guidelines/benchmarks that can improve interactions with children.	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.0
7) I want to be involved in discussing the new CTELDs.	3.4	3.9	4.0	3.6
8) The CTELDs can help me keep track of children's growth.	4.1	4.2	4.4	3.9
9) The meaning of the new CTELDs is clear to me.	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.3

A comparison by mean response suggests that, overall, family members and home-based providers were less likely to currently understand or be familiar with the standards than either center-based providers or "other professionals". Home- and center-based providers were most likely to agree that "I would like to know more about the new CTELDs" and "Learning about the new CTELDs would help me to support children's growth and development."

Participants rated the importance of using specific methods to share the CTELDs with early childhood care providers, professionals and families. Overall results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Participant Choice in Format and Process for Sharing Frequency and Mean Response

	Not at All Important (1)	Somewhat Important (2)	Quite Important (3)	Extremely Important (4)	Mean
1) Use videotapes to provide examples	6.5%	31.5%	39.4%	22.6%	2.8
2) On-line training through webinars	6.0%	42.7%	35.2%	16.1%	2.6
3) In-person training at a central location	1.0%	9.4%	39.0%	50.6%	3.4
4) Distribute hard copy (paper) materials	1.8%	14.9%	39.0%	44.2%	3.3
5) In-person teaching at the home or worksite	4.2%	17.3%	42.7%	35.9%	3.1
6) On-line networks or e-mail discussions	8.9%	45.3%	31.2%	14.5%	2.5
7) In-person conversations around the standards	2.4%	12.3%	47.0%	38.3%	3.2
8) Distribute materials at meetings	1.0%	12.2%	48.8%	38.0%	3.2
9) Clearly describe the connection between the CTELDs and other standards	1.0%	6.1%	39.6%	53.3%	3.5
10) Use social media, such as Facebook or Twitter, to share information	31.3%	37.4%	20.8%	10.5%	2.1

	Not at All Important (1)	Somewhat Important (2)	Quite Important (3)	Extremely Important (4)	Mean
11) Develop materials in languages other than English	3.4%	16.7%	29.1%	50.8%	3.3
12) Use on-line video services, such as YouTube, to share information and materials	21.7%	35.9%	28.5%	13.9%	2.3
13) Use on-line “apps” to share information with smart phone and iPad users.	19.1%	36.8%	29.8%	14.3%	2.4
14) Use 2-1-1 Infoline to share information	12.2%	30.6%	35.8%	21.4%	2.7
15) Use on-line blogs to share information	23.2%	41.3%	26.4%	9.1%	2.2
16) Use other sharing strategies	12.8%	33.9%	35.7%	17.6%	2.6

Overall, respondents were most like to perceive “Clearly describe the connection between the CTEDLS and other standards” as important and least likely to perceive the use of social media and use of blogs to share information as important. Other items receiving a high mean score and therefore considered to be “quite important” or “extremely important” were the use of “in-person training at a central location”, the distribution of hard copy materials and the development of materials in languages other than English.

Results are summarized by stakeholder group below.

Table 7: Participant Choice in Format and Process for Sharing: Comparison by Stakeholder Group Mean Response

	Families (N=29)	Home- Based Provider (N=63)	Center- Based Providers (N=235)	Other Professionals (N=115)
1) Use videotapes to provide examples	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.8
2) On-line training through webinars	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.6
3) In-person training at a central location	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.3
4) Distribute hard copy (paper) materials	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.1
5) In-person teaching at the home or worksite	3.1	2.9	3.2	2.9
6) On-line networks or e-mail discussions	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.4
7) In-person conversations around the standards	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.2
8) Distribute materials at meetings	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.2
9) Clearly describe the connection between the CTEDLS and other standards	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.3
10) Use social media, such as Facebook or Twitter, to share information	2.4	2.3	2.0	2.1
11) Work with the faith-based community to communicate with families	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.5
12) Develop materials in languages other than English	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.4
13) Use on-line video services, such as YouTube, to share information and materials	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.4
14) Use on-line “apps” to share information with smart phone and iPad users.	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4
15) Use 2-1-1 Infoline to share information	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.7
16) Use on-line blogs to share information	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.2
17) Use other sharing strategies	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.5

A number of differences were identified between the mean responses of the four stakeholder groups. Center-based providers were more likely to rate the use of “in-person training at a central location” and the need to “clearly describe the connection between the CTEDLS and other standards” as important than representatives of the other three groups. Family members were more likely to consider working with the faith-based community and the use of “on-line apps” as important than members of the other three groups. “Other professionals” were more likely than other stakeholders to rate the development of materials in languages other than English as important.

Participants rated the importance of including a variety of supplementary materials when sharing information on the standards to early childhood care providers, professionals and families. Overall results are summarized in Table 8.

**Table 8: Participant Choice in Supplemental Materials
Frequency and Mean Response**

	Not at All Important (1)	Somewhat Important (2)	Quite Important (3)	Extremely Important (4)	Mean
1) Information on when to look for additional help for a child who might have developmental delays	.2%	2.2%	28.3%	69.3%	3.7
2) Ideas for activities to support development based upon the CTEDLS	.4%	4.2%	31.8%	63.6%	3.6
3) Ideas for helping children to learn specific skills included in the CTEDLS	.8%	5.2%	31.5%	62.5%	3.6
4) General information about development at different ages	.6%	6.9%	39.1%	53.5%	3.5
5) Specific examples of activities for helping a child develop the next appropriate stage of growth	.4%	4.2%	30.5%	65.0%	3.6
6) Specific examples of how to observe/document a child's progress.	.4%	3.8%	32.8%	63.0%	3.6

All items received a mean response of 3.5 or above indicating that respondents consider them to be “Quite Important” to “Extremely Important”.

Results were also compared by stakeholder group. Results are summarized in Table 9 below.

**Table 9: Participant Choice in Supplemental Materials: Comparison by Stakeholder Group
Mean Response**

	Families (N=28)	Home- Based Providers (N=63)	Center- Based Providers (N=116)	Other Professionals (N=116)
1) Information on when to look for additional help for a child who might have developmental delays	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.6
2) Ideas for activities to support development based upon the CTEDLS	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.5
3) Ideas for helping children to learn specific skills included in the CTEDLS	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5
4) General information about development at different ages	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.4
5) Specific examples of activities for helping a child develop the next appropriate stage of growth	3.3	3.7	3.6	3.6
6) Specific examples of how to observe/document a child's progress.	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.5

Home-based providers were most likely to rate each item as important than representatives of the other three stakeholder groups. Overall, family members were least likely to rate each item as important.

Data Strengths and Limitations

This report summarizes data collection efforts developed and implemented to present the results of a needs assessment for the dissemination process of the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards.

The data collection effort has the following strengths:

- Diversified data collection strategies including focus groups, interviews and an on-line survey with broad representation throughout Connecticut.
- Excellent participation of representatives from each stakeholder group, from each RESC region, and from urban, suburban and rural areas throughout Connecticut.
- Good participation of a variety of ethnic and racial groups in survey data collection.
- The administration of surveys in both English and Spanish and the completion of three focus groups in Spanish to support input from Spanish-speaking families and individuals.
- The use of quality focus group and survey tools reviewed by a variety of early childhood professionals prior to administration.
- Participation of individuals with and without previous information regarding the CTELDS.

However, as with any research study, data collection and use of data has some limitations, including:

- Survey and focus groups were not completed in languages other than Spanish or English.
- Reliability and validity assessment of data collection instruments has not been completed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Question 1: What are the current understandings held by families, home-based providers, early care and education providers and professionals of the value, purpose and need for the CTELDS?

Results from qualitative focus groups were supported by the results of the on-line survey and indicate overwhelmingly that families, home and center-based providers and representatives of other professional groups generally have some information and familiarity with the value, purpose, need for and impact of the CTELDS. However, the degree to which stakeholders are knowledgeable about and able to use the CTELDS varies both within and across groups with a large number of individuals expressing no or limited knowledge about the CTELDS or how to use them. Overall, respondents stated that “when individuals understand the use and purpose of learning standards, they are generally perceived as important” with the understanding that the a large number of stakeholders do not currently have a sufficient understanding of the role, meaning, purpose and need for learning standards.

Additionally, a wide range of perceptions of and reactions to the use of standards were described by focus group respondents with many of these perceptions perceived to act as potential barriers to the use of CTELDS. Barriers to the use of CTELDS were identified including fear, misperceptions of the role and purpose of CTELDS, varied and unclear definitions of the words “learning *standard*”, varied educational levels across stakeholders, financial restrictions, a lack of materials for implementation of educational activities related to the use of CTELDS, and lack of time for learning and implementation of the CTELDS.

Question 2: How can we best reach families, home-based providers, early care and education providers and professionals during the CTELDS dissemination process?

Survey and focus group respondents provided a number of suggestions and potential strategies to reach stakeholders throughout the dissemination process. These included clear definition of the CTELDS, use of examples, clear and simple language, provision of trainings within a mixed or team-based setting, involvement of

representatives of key stakeholder groups to facilitate “buy-in”, use of a variety of formats and processes for communication, clear illustration of the connections between new CTELDS and existing standards, consistent technical support, well-coordinated and monitored consultants and/or local/regional contact people, concrete strategies for implementing and assessing and working with existing networks of providers to provide training, support, communication and evaluation at ongoing meetings.

Information was described as needing to be shared in a variety of formats. Ideas provided included the use of hard copy documents, charts and graphs, interactive web sites, e-mails with brief updates, bulletin boards, blogs, television clips, the use of Facebook or other social media, the use of “apps” to share or use information, and the use of on-line chats, networking or conferencing. Regardless of the format used, the need for brevity as well as specificity, the use of a variety of options, ongoing communication and clarity of information were consistently emphasized.

Ongoing interaction and communication with state agency representatives was considered critical by respondents. Options provided included state consultant or evaluator attendance at ongoing meetings to share information, obtain feedback and address questions; the use of surveys and/or focus groups on a regular basis, and ongoing assessment of the implementation process through reconnections with needs assessment participants and examination of progress made in key areas.

Participants provided a number of recommendations for the consideration of the CT Early Childhood Education Cabinet and CSDE. These recommendations include the following:

- Develop and communicate clear and consistent expectations regarding the implementation, purpose and use of the CTELDS. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of including expectations on timeline, use on a day-to-day basis, alignment and integration with existing standards, expected outcomes, required materials, expected resources and assessments.
- Develop clear and simple descriptions of the standards for sharing throughout the school community. It was recommended that these descriptions be written in simple language to allow all stakeholders to easily comprehend the standards.
- Develop and share cross-walks of the CTELDS to existing standards for each domain and age band.
- Provide professional development in conjunction with coaching, mentoring, technical assistance and provision of on-line or hard copy documents and training modules in a variety of formats to assist stakeholders to develop a bridge between standards and day-to-day practice. Provide standards awareness workshops and community forums to stakeholders throughout Connecticut to ensure a general understanding of the implementation process.
- Disseminate information in a wide range of formats and through a wide variety of venues in a consistent and ongoing manner.
- Implement ongoing communication and evaluation strategies to promote discussion of CTELDS and ensure consistent feedback between stakeholders and state agency representatives.
- Ensure that adequate materials are available for stakeholders to allow the integration of the CTELDS.
- Provide opportunities for teachers, parents, administrators and professionals from various stakeholder groups to interact and collaborate to facilitate communication and a consistent approach to implementation across all grade levels.
- Provide instructional materials necessary to support stakeholders in the implementation of the CTELDS.

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Reach Out to Families:

Parent-Teacher Conversations

About Learning

Holding a structured grade-level or classroom conversation between teachers and parents is a powerful way to form a partnership to improve student learning. It can be done in an hour. The goal of the conversation is to discuss how parents and teachers can work together to help children develop crucial academic skills. Follow up with positive communications and another conversation later in the year to check on progress and revise the goals and plan.

A conversation can take place as part of activities the school is already doing. For example, a back-to-school night can be restructured so that parents meet with teachers in the classroom. Other possibilities include literacy night, parent workshops, open house, parent-teacher conferences, PTA nights, or during a professional development day.

1. **Icebreaker/welcome** (10-12 mins) Welcome families, and seat them in small groups:

- Ask: “Share with each other in your groups some things you’re doing at home to help your child with learning.”
- After awhile, ask tables to report out, one idea per table at a time. Chart the answers.
- Listen closely and affirm what they say. This builds trust and establishes a warm, personal relationship, plus gives good information about what to build on.

2. **Share data on key skills** (10 mins)

- Share with parents the general learning goals for the year and explain the reading and math skills where students need the most help.
- Explain what the skills are and how they are measured. (e.g. Fluency: Fourth graders should be able to read 105 words a minute correctly and with expression. Our students average about 62 words, and only 15% are at grade level.)

3. **Model a teaching strategy that addresses this learning goal.** (5 mins): “Here is something that I do with your children in the classroom that you could do at home.” Pick 1-2 strategies that parents can easily use at home

4. **Practice this activity at tables.** (10 mins) Ask parents to pair up. One parent plays the child and the other parent tries out the approach the teacher just shared. (During this activity, walk around and coach the parents, as needed.)

5. **Ask parents which strategies they would like to use at home.** (5 mins) (e.g. If your child is at a 62 in fluency now, where would you want/expect him to be in January?") Coach parents to set realistic goals.

6. **Ask parents: “How can I help you and your child accomplish this goal and make growth?”** (10 mins) Chart parents’ questions and ideas. (e.g. Can we come watch you teach this in class? Can you record any weekly progress in my child’s planner? Can you send us more ideas about how to help at home? Can we borrow books and math games from the class library?) All this information can be used as material for the Title I school-parent compact.*

7. **Closure.** (5 mins) Explain how you will follow up. Share your contact information.

* For tools and a 10-step process to revitalizing your School-Parent Compact and aligning it with Common Core Standards, go to www.ctschoolparentcompact.org

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Content Validation Study

September 20, 2013

Kyle Snow, Ph.D.

Director, Center for Applied Research

Executive Summary

The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet has focused on the development of early learning and development standards to provide “Comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards that reflect a progression of skills birth through age 5, aligned with Kindergarten-Grade 2 standards.” The goal of these standards is to ensure that all children are provided with early experiences that support their optimal development. NAEYC was contracted to conduct a content validation study of the draft standards. The study was driven by the formation of a panel of reviewers with nationally-recognized expertise in areas of early childhood development. These reviewers were provided with an orientation to the draft standards and were asked to provide feedback through a semi-structured on-line survey. Reviewers evaluated the degree to which the draft standards captured significant areas of child development, and did so in ways that were appropriate to child age and the diversity of children in early care and education settings. Overall, the reviewers rated the standards as being very significant and largely appropriate. In addition, they provided more than 600 comments, from very specific recommendations to improving indicators to broader feedback that hit on issues of revision and implementation. This report provides details of the content validation study and provides an overview of the reviewers’ commentaries. Specific comments are captured and provided in a separate file to the Cabinet.

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Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards Content Validation Study

Background

The Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet (“The Cabinet”) has focused on the development of early learning and development standards to provide “Comprehensive and multi-domain early learning standards that reflect a progression of skills birth through age 5, aligned with Kindergarten-Grade 2 standards.” (see <http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/early-learning-standards.html>). To achieve this goal, the Cabinet has been working towards the development and roll-out of early learning standards by September 2013. To date the Cabinet has pursued an extensive and inclusive approach in developing the standards. The work of the Cabinet has been consistent with the position statement issued by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE) regarding the development and implementation of early learning standards (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE, 2002). This position was issued by NAEYC and NAECS/SDE to provide guidance as states were developing early learning standards, oftentimes with dramatic variations in both the process for their development and the resulting content of early learning standards. As states have adopted early learning standards, they continue to vary widely in their content (see, e.g., Scott-Little, Lesko, Martella & Milburn, 2007; Scott-Little, Kagan & Frelow, 2006). In their review of early learning standards for 40 states, Scott-Little, Kagan and Frelow (2003) noted that while many states followed recommendations from NAEYC and NAECS/SDE, state standards were often not addressing all critical domains of early childhood (notably approaches to learning and social-emotional areas), and many states were not adequately considering the needs of diverse children and families, especially those who were English language learners and children with disabilities. While fewer states have developed standards for infants and toddlers (or a complete birth to age 5 set of standards), states’ efforts at developing standards for infants and toddlers are similarly challenged by identifying critical content and making standards appropriate for diverse children (e.g., Scott-Little, Kagan & Frelow, 2005). Within this larger context, the Cabinet’s contracted NAEYC to complete a content validation study

As noted by Scott-Little et al. (2003), the NAEYC and NAECS/SDE (2002) position statement on the development of early learning standards has become the primary framework within which states develop their early learning standards. When developed according to rigorous, inclusive, and transparent processes, early learning standards “can lead to greater opportunities for positive development and learning in these early years” (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2002, p. 2). According to NAEYC and NAECS/SDE (2002), the four critical elements of early learning standards include: (1) standards emphasize significant, developmentally appropriate content and outcomes; (2) standards are developed and reviewed through informed, inclusive processes; (3) standards use implementation and assessment strategies that are ethical and appropriate for young children; and (4) standards are accompanied by strong supports for early childhood programs, professionals, and families. As noted below, the Cabinet has pursued the development of early learning standards that meet these four broad expectations. Critical to this project is the first of these – that standards emphasize the appropriate content.

Expectations for young learners were initially conceptualized by the National Goals Panel that provides a general model for the primary content areas that early learning standards should address (Kagan, Moore & Bredekamp, 1995). These acknowledged the importance of five domains for children’s school readiness: physical well-being and motor development; social and emotional development; approaches toward learning; language development, and, cognitive and general knowledge. Within this frame, discipline-specific learning goals may be incorporated into one or more of these broader areas (e.g., reading, mathematics, science, and/or the arts), or the five broad areas may be further divided and defined. Regardless of the structure, both the Goals Panel and the NAEYC support the development of learning standards that speak to key domains of children’s development from birth to age 5 (see also Bowman, Donovan & Burns, 200; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). As noted by Scott-Little, et al. (2003, 2005) states vary in the degree to which they achieve this aim.

Content Validation

Validating the content of early learning standards, then, is critical to ensuring that the broad range of children’s learning needs is met. The NAEYC position statement describes the content requirements for early learning (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2002, p. 4):

To be effective, early learning standards must explicitly incorporate (1) all domains of young children’s development; (2) content and desired outcomes that have been shown to be significant for young children’s development and learning; (3) knowledge of the characteristics, processes, and sequences of early learning and skill development; (4) appropriate, specific expectations related to children’s ages or developmental levels; and (5) cultural, community, linguistic, and individual perspectives.

These expectations form the basis of the 5 key research questions in this validation study:

1. Do the standards adequately capture all domains of young children’s development, from birth to age 5?
2. Do the standards reflect significant content or desired outcomes for young children?
3. Do the standards reflect the known process of development and sequences of learning for each standard?
4. Are the standards appropriate to the identified age period?¹
5. Do the standards adequately account for diversity in community, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and developmental abilities?

This content validation study was designed to answer these question through the empanelling of a group of child development experts who can provide detailed feedback on the draft standards. This report describes the methodology used to conduct the validation study and summarizes the results of the panels work.

¹ It is important to differentiate expert judgment regarding age appropriateness as collected within this content validation study from a more rigorous, data-driven, age validation process that would provide the best information about the age appropriateness of each indicator.

² Due to an error in the survey, the sub-domain “Develop an understanding of economics systems and resources”

Methodology

This content validation study utilized a process modeled after peer-review processes common in scientific contexts. A group of experts was recruited to comprise the review panel. As noted below, these experts were identified and recruited in collaboration with representatives of the Cabinet. Once reviewers agreed to join the panel, consulting agreements and confidentiality agreements were executed, and reviewers were provided with access to an on-line study orientation. Following completion of the orientation, reviewers were given access to all relevant study files (e.g., overview documents, each domain set of standards) through a shared Google drive, as well as a link to the on-line survey. Once reviewers completed the survey (and sent comments to the study director, if reviewers chose to provide responses in this manner), responses were reviewed and follow-up or clarifying questions sent to the reviewer. Once all initial reviews were complete, a comprehensive list of comments was compiled and provided to the reviewers for a secondary review.

Identifying Reviewers

The focus of this study was the specific content of the draft standards, so reviewers were sought who had expertise in one or more domains of child development captured by the standards. A set of selection criteria was developed by the study director in collaboration with representatives from the Cabinet to guide recruitment of reviewers. These criteria included:

1. Expertise in one or more age groups (infants, toddlers, preschool [3- to 5-years])
2. Expertise in one or more domains of early development (social, emotional, cognitive [including language and literacy], mathematics, physical and motor development)
3. Experience in early care and education settings, and/or early childhood intervention

Additional consideration was given to identifying nationally recognized experts (i.e., not restricting reviewers to in-state, although the drafting process included multiple opportunities for in-state stakeholders to provide feedback) who provided for a diverse panel. Following these guidelines a pool of reviewers was identified and prioritized in consultation with representatives from the Cabinet and an initial set of 10 reviewers was identified. All of the highest priority reviewers were invited and consented to participate in the study. This set was expanded to 12 to allow for additional areas of expertise to be brought onto the panel. The final review panel, their areas of primary expertise and professional affiliation are provided in table 1.

Table 1. Reviewer names, primary areas of expertise, and affiliation.

Reviewer	Area(s) of Expertise	Affiliation
Catherine Tamis-LeMonda	Infant/toddler social and cognitive development	New York University
Leah E. Robinson	Pediatric motor development	Auburn University
Sylvia Sanchez	Bilingual education, teacher preparation for DLL	George Mason University
Susanne Denham	Social development	George Mason University
Marilou Hyson	Approaches to learning	University of Pennsylvania
Barbara Wasik	Literacy	Temple University
Angela Eckhoff	Visual arts	Old Dominion University
Doug Clements	Early math, math standards	University of Denver
Heidi Schweingruber	Science, science standards	National Research Council
Kathleen Hebbeler	Children with disabilities	SRI, International
Gayle Mindes	Social Studies	DePaul University
Carol Weitzman, Ada Fenick & Marjorie Rosenthal	Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics	Yale University

NOTE: Drs. Rosenthal and Fenick contributed comments and survey responses in collaboration with Dr. Weitzman.

Data Collection Strategy

The approach taken in this review was intended to allow adequate time for the reviewers to become familiar with the draft standards and provide feedback on them. An asynchronous data collection process was developed to elicit reviewer ratings and commentary about the draft standards within the structure provided by the five research questions identified above. These were pursued through a series of close-ended items that targeted specific levels of analysis (shown in table 2). For each of these items, reviewers were also asked to provide additional comments. While these tended to be provided at the same level of analysis as requested in the close-ended items, in practice reviewers' comments were not restricted in the same way.

Table 2. Distribution of study questions across multiple levels of analysis.

Research question	Level of analysis		
	Domain	Sub-domain	Indicator
Do the standards adequately capture all domains of young children’s development, from birth to age 5?	X		
Do the standards reflect significant content or desired outcomes for young children?	X	X	
Do the standards reflect the known process of development and sequences of learning for each standard?		X	X
Are the standards appropriate to the identified age period?		X	X
Do the standards adequately account for diversity in community, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and developmental abilities?	X	X	X

The close- and open-ended items were built into a secured, web-based survey instrument distributed to the reviewers following their completion of the on-line study orientation. Reviewers generally completed their initial reviews within 2 weeks, as requested, but accommodations were made to reviewers’ schedules as necessary to allow for reviews to be completed. As reviewers completed the on-line survey, responses were scanned and any follow-up questions based upon the response set were sent to individual reviewers for clarification. There were no substantive follow-up questions, but several clarifications of language and intent were made to reviewer comments (and subsequently updated in the comments database). Once all the initial reviews were completed, all comments were compiled. During this process, internal comments (e.g., reviewer comments specifically to the principal investigator requesting clarification) were removed. However, comments with similar content from different reviewers were retained, so there was some redundancy in commentary. This provided an indication of the frequency and potentially agreement among multiple reviewers on specific points. A total of 634 comments were compiled during this initial review. This set of comments, as well as a request for any final comments, was sent to the entire review panel for additional commentary. This process resulted in an additional 40 comments.

Findings

The findings from this content validation study are organized around the 5 research questions noted earlier. Findings from close-ended items and summaries of reviewer comments (in response to open-ended survey items or generated by reviewers without a specific prompt) are provided where appropriate. The entire set of close-ended responses and reviewer comments have been provided to the Early Childhood Cabinet, so this report highlights trends in these comments only. In examining findings from this study, it is important to note the small number of reviewers ($n=12$) and the fact that the reviewers were selected specifically for areas of expertise, though they also brought board knowledge of early childhood development as well. To accommodate this feature of the review panel, reviewers were allowed to either not respond to specific items, or to indicate “unable to judge”. One consequence of

this is that many of the close-ended items had fewer than 12 respondents. An additional consequence is that reviewers contributed different numbers of comments on each domain, generally in relation to their level of expertise and experience with each area.

How Significant and Adequate are the Domains and Sub-Domains?

The draft early learning standards are intended to adequately capture all significant domains and sub-domains of child learning and development. To evaluate the degree to which the draft standards realize this goal, reviewers were asked several questions about the domains and sub-domains. First, reviewers were asked, when given the list of domains, if any important areas of child development were not included. Next, reviewers were asked to evaluate the significance and adequacy of domains and sub-domains. Finally, reviewers were asked to evaluate the degree to which the standards (as a whole) capture the skills and dispositions important for the development of lifelong learners.

Domain Coverage

Reviewers were asked whether the set of domains captured all of the important areas of learning and development important for young children from birth to school entry. Overall, 10 of the 12 reviewers indicated that the domains did provide coverage of all important areas of early childhood development, and 2 reviewers responded that some important domains may be missing. Reviewer comments were focused less on what gaps may exist (although they did provide a number of areas that are not explicitly included) than in how the domains are organized. For example, reviewers questioned the ages at which some domains were represented and ages at which they were not (for example, the introduction of mathematics, science, etc., starting at age 3-years). This was a recurring issue throughout the study. Reviewers also wondered why logic and reasoning was presented as a single domain, rather than a sub-domain. A similar question was raised with regards to approaches to learning, although there was no real suggestion that it not be included as a domain. Reviewers also commented on the separateness, but relatedness, of language and literacy. Finally, one reviewer questioned whether social and emotional areas should be combined or separated.

Significance of Domains

Reviewers were asked to rate the significance or importance of each domain for young children's development on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 2 (very significant/important). The average ratings are shown in figure 1. Several domains were unanimously rated as very significant/important (scores of 2; social and emotional development, science, literacy, and language). Social studies (average score 1.1) and creative arts and expression (average score 1.4) had the lowest average ratings, but were still rated as significant/important.

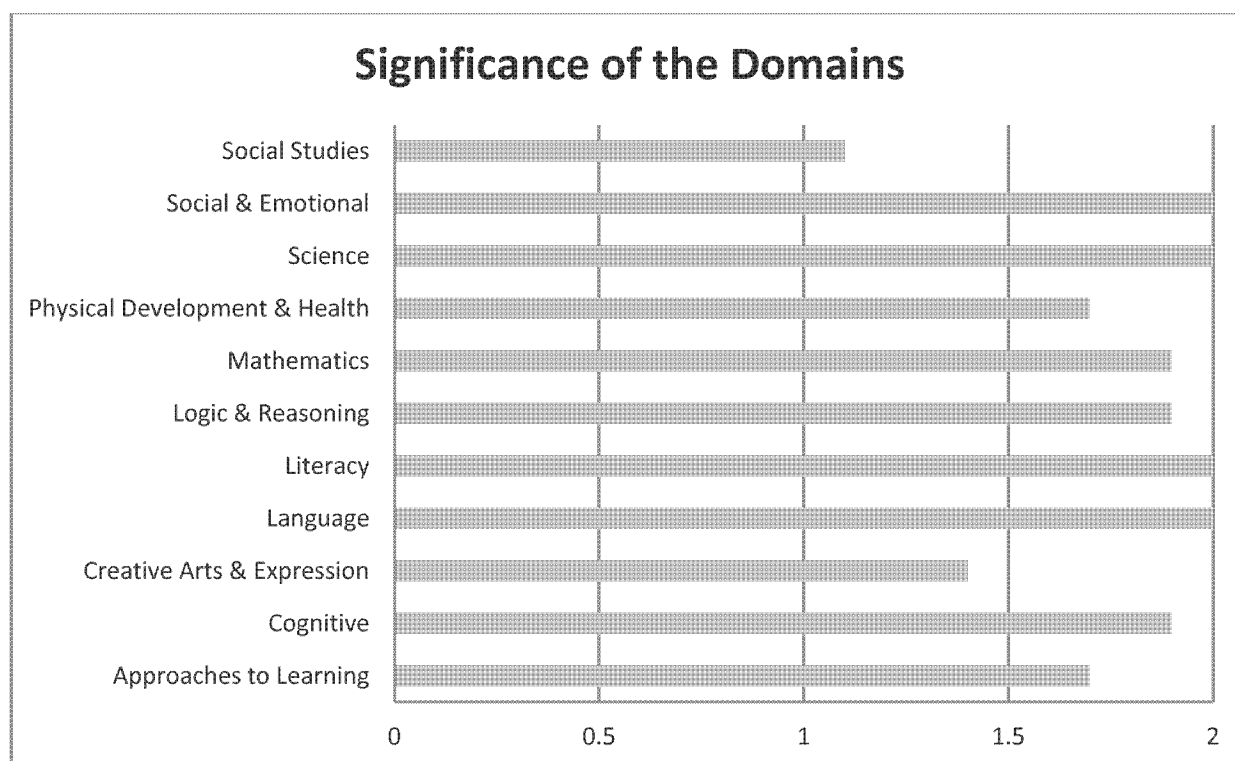


Figure 1. How significant or important is each domain for young children (rated 0= not significant/important to 2=very significant/important)

Significance and Importance of Sub-domains

Reviewers were also asked to rate the significance/importance of the sub-domains within each domain. These ratings use the same 0-2 scoring range (not significant/important, significant/important, very significant/important) as was used for the domains. However, the sub-domains were rated individually; there is no necessary mathematical relationship between domain ratings and the ratings for the component sub-domains (i.e., the domain rating is an independent rating, not a mathematical average of the sub-domains). In addition, reviewers were asked to provide commentary about any area within each domain that may be missing from the sub-domain set or any sub-domains that may cause confusion or disagreement.

Approaches to Learning

As shown in table 3, all of the sub-domains of the approached to learning domain were scored near the very significant point with the exception of “make decisions and plan” and “demonstrate flexibility...” which were scored mid-way between significant and very significant.

Table 3. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the approaches to learning domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Approaches to Learning	1.7
Display curiosity and initiative	1.8
Make decisions and plan	1.5
Attend and engage with environment, people and objects	1.8
Enjoy Learning	1.8
Persist	1.8
Develop independence as a learner	1.7
Demonstrate flexibility and inventiveness in use of materials	1.5
Cooperate with peers in learning experiences	1.8

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Reviewer comments about the approaches to learning domain and its sub-domains were generally positive. There was some suggestion that approaches to learning could be subsumed under a different domain, as well as suggestions that some of the sub-domains might be captured in other domains. One reviewer noted that within the field there may be a lack of clarity or consensus about components, and another's comments underscored the potential for confusion between approaches to learning and elements of executive functioning and behavior and emotion regulation. Indeed, the lack of consensus is represented by the number of additional sub-domains reviewers mentioned in their comments. Despite this, as another reviewer noted, approaches to learning links to both the outcomes framework for Head Start as well as the original National Education Goals Panel recommendations.

Cognitive

Reviewers were nearly unanimous in rating the cognitive domain and all of its subdomains as very significant for young children's development (see table 4). Reviewer comments for the sub-domains in the cognitive domain tended to focus on wording of the sub-domains. Reviewers also saw the ways in which this domain connected with other domains introduced starting at 3-years (e.g., math, science) but thought this could be made more explicit.

Table 4. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the cognitive development domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Cognitive Development	1.9
Develop Reasoning and problem solving skills	1.9
Engage in Symbolic Representation	1.9
General Knowledge	1.8

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Creative Arts & Expression

The creative arts domain, and its component sub-domains generally received lower ratings than any other domain or sub-domain – tending to be mid-way between significant and very significant (see table 5).

Table 5. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the creative arts and expression domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Creative Arts and Expression	1.4
Listen and respond to, express themselves, appreciate and understand music	1.6
Create, explore and express themselves through a variety of artistic media	1.5
Create, perform and respond to variety of play experiences	1.5
Express themselves through movement and demonstrate an understanding of dance	1.5
Describe or respond to their own work or the creative work of others	1.5

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

The somewhat moderate ratings for this domain are interesting when considered in light of reviewer comments which expressed the omnipresence of the arts in early childhood classrooms as well as the need for clear guidance in what children can do and what appropriate instruction looks like. Several additional themes appeared in reviewer comments. First, there was an expectation that creative play would be found under this domain, so its absence was noted by multiple reviewers. Reviewers also noted that the sub-domains within the creative arts domain consistently relied upon some performance or demonstration. While this allows for a ready image of assessment, it does lead to potential concerns

when considering children with disabilities, for whom specific forms of demonstration may not be appropriate. It also reduces the presence of content knowledge in the arts.

Language

The language domain, and its sub-domains, was rated as very significant by nearly all of the reviewers (see table 6). Reviewer comments for these sub-domains did not question the content but did raise questions about how it is organized. For example, there was suggestion that vocabulary needs to exist as its own sub-domain. Reviewers also noted that while language is articulated for children from birth, and literacy introduced as a separate domain for 3-year-olds, the presence of the explicitly pre-literacy domain within the language domain is potential confusing.

Table 6. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the language domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Language	2.0
Comprehend language	2.0
Use language to express ideas, feelings and needs	2.0
Use language for social interaction	1.9
Engage with books, songs and written language (pre-literacy)	1.9

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Literacy

Like the language domain, the literacy domain and sub-domains were rated by nearly every reviewer as very significant (see table 7). There are parallels as well in the commentary reviewers provided. First, the relationship between language and literacy was again noted and the placement of pre-literacy within the language domain questioned. Reviewers also commented on the absence of story-telling as an important part of early child development, and another area where language (the oral language component) and literacy (narrative) intersect.

Table 7. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the literacy domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Literacy	2.0
Gain book appreciation and knowledge	1.8
Understand concepts of print and conventions	1.9
Develop phonological awareness	1.9
Write for meaning or to communicate	1.8

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Logic & Reasoning

Reviewer ratings and comments on the logic and reasoning domain and its sub-domains underscore the complexity of preparing standards. On one hand, the ratings were nearly all indicative of very significant content in the domain and sub-domains (see table 8). At the same time, reviewer comments echoed the strength of the content while at the same time questioning whether this should be a single domain with sub-domains, or if the sub-domains may not be better placed within other domains (this issue arise again when reviewers evaluated the indicators for this domain as well).

Table 8. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the logic and reasoning domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Logic and Reasoning	1.9
Engage in Symbolic Representation	2.0
Engage in Reasoning and Problem Solving Skills	2.0
Apply Known Information to New Experiences	1.8

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Mathematics

Like several other domains, mathematics and its sub-domains were nearly unanimously rated as very significant (see table 9). If anything, reviewer comments suggest the need for expanding the domain to capture additional constructs, including time, spatial understanding and math literacy. There were some comments questioning the brief titles given to the subdomains (not reported in table 8), which closely mirror concepts from the National Goals Panel as well as those found in the Common Core State Standards for mathematics. In addition, some reviewers expressed concern that the language used in the titles (and in subsequent comments about indicators this was somewhat reduced) may be intimidating to teachers. Finally, reviewers noted that very early mathematical development occurs during birth to 3-years, so the limited focus on the later age bands within this domains was seen as limiting.

Table 9. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the mathematics domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Mathematics	2.0
Understand counting and cardinality, gain a sense of numbers and number operations, and recognize that numbers can be used to tell how many	2.0
Understand and describe relationships to solve problems	1.8
Understand the attributes and relative properties of objects as related to size, capacity and area	2.0
Understand shapes and their properties and how objects are related to one another, including composition and position	2.0

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Physical Development & Health

Reviewer ratings for the sub-domains within the physical development and health domain were interesting in so far as there was a clear difference in how significant different sub-domains were perceived to be (see table 10). While the domain and several sub-domains were rated nearly unanimously to be very significant, two areas were clearly valued less – “acquire adaptive skills...including self care” and “maintain physical health.” Reviewer comments suggest why this difference may be shown. The importance of these areas for young children was not disputed so much as the importance of these areas as standards connected to early childhood programs. These were generally seen as not part of the expectations that should be held for programs.

Table 10. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the physical development and health domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Physical Development and Health	1.7
Acquire large muscle skills needed to engage in developmentally appropriate tasks	1.8
Acquire small muscle skills needed to engage in developmentally appropriate tasks	1.8
Acquire adaptive skills, including using health knowledge and engaging in self-care activities	1.6
Maintain physical health status and well-being	1.4

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Science

Like the other “traditional” and “academic” domains introduced for children in the latter age bands, reviewers generally rated science and its sub-domains as very significant (see table 11). The exception here was with the sub-domain of patterns in light and weather over time, which on average was just at the “significant” score point. While reviewers made numerous comments about these sub-domains, these tended to focus on wording and (as with other domains introduced only for the latter age bands) how this content is captured for children younger than 3-5-years old. Reviewer comments on these sub-domains, especially areas that may be missing, were similar to many of the essential skills and dispositions discussed below, although this similarity was not noted by the reviewers.

Table 11. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the science domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Science	2.0
Engage in scientific inquiry and processes	1.9
Understand the characteristics of basic living things	1.7
Understand interactions between objects and the forces that affect their motion	1.7
Understand patterns and cycles in light and weather over time	1.1

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer’s reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Social & Emotional

Social and emotional development was also generally viewed as very significant, as were its numerous sub-domains (see table 12). Reviewer comments on these sub-domains consistently suggested that the conceptualization and presentation of the sub-domains is potentially confusing. Reviewers noted the multiple inter-connections among sub-domains that are not recognized within the structure of the standard or the structure of the standards as a set. For example, self-regulation of behavior and attention are part of many models of approaches to learning as well as social and emotional development.

Table 12. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the social and emotional domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Social and Emotional	2.0
Develop trusting healthy attachments and relationships with primary caregiver	2.0
Self-regulate emotions, behaviors and attention	2.0
Develops self-awareness, self-concepts and competence	1.9
To engage with others and the world around them	1.9
Experience and express a range of emotions	2.0
Develop positive social interactions and relationships with peers	2.0

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

Social Studies

Reviewer ratings of the social studies domain and sub-domains appear paradoxical.² Overall, the impression of the domain is near the "significant" rating, yet some of its sub-domains appear to be more significant (see table 13). Reviewer comments suggested some confusion about the intended content of the sub-domains, and how it was different from other areas. In addition, many reviewers used words like "thin" to describe the domain. At the same time, reviewers saw the attention to history (which was not highly rated as a sub-domain) to suggest that other areas, like geography, should also be included.

Table 13. Average ratings of the significance/importance for the social studies domain and sub-domains.

Domain and Sub-domain	Average rating for significance/ importance
Social Studies	1.1
Understand self, family and a diverse community	1.7
Learn about people and the environment	1.6
Understand change over time (History)	1.1

NOTES: Average ratings are based on 9-12 reviewer's reporting a rating for each sub-domain. Ratings are based upon scores of 0=not at all significant/important, 1=significant/important, 2=very significant/important.

² Due to an error in the survey, the sub-domain "Develop an understanding of economics systems and resources" was not included in the list of sub-domains to be rated by reviewers. This sub-domain and its indicators was included in the standards documents provided to the reviewers, so they had opportunity to review and provide feedback on this sub-domain title.

Supporting Essential Skills and Dispositions

Reviewer ratings of the significance and adequacy of the domains and sub-domains included in the draft standards may reflect the unique perceptions reviewers bring to the standards based largely upon their specific expertise. One reviewer may define significance differently than others, for example. However, the state of Connecticut has developed a frame through which the standards can also be viewed – “Fostering Competent Learners - Essential Skills and Dispositions.” Reviewers were given this framework and asked to evaluate the degree to which the draft standards were consistent with the dispositions provided in the framework.³ Reviewers scored each disposition on a scale from 0 (not at all captured) through 4 (very well captured). As shown in figure 2, most of the skills and dispositions were rated as being generally “well captured” (score of 3.0), with average scores ranging from 2.7 (for “be flexible”) to 3.0 (for “be purposeful and reflective”). The limited variability suggests reasonable consistency across dispositions. However, reviewers commented that the connections between the dispositions and the standards were not as pronounced as they could be, and some suggested making the connections more prominent. Indeed, if the standards and criteria are driven by these dispositions (as is the case), then highlighting the connections between them and indicators would bolster their uptake.

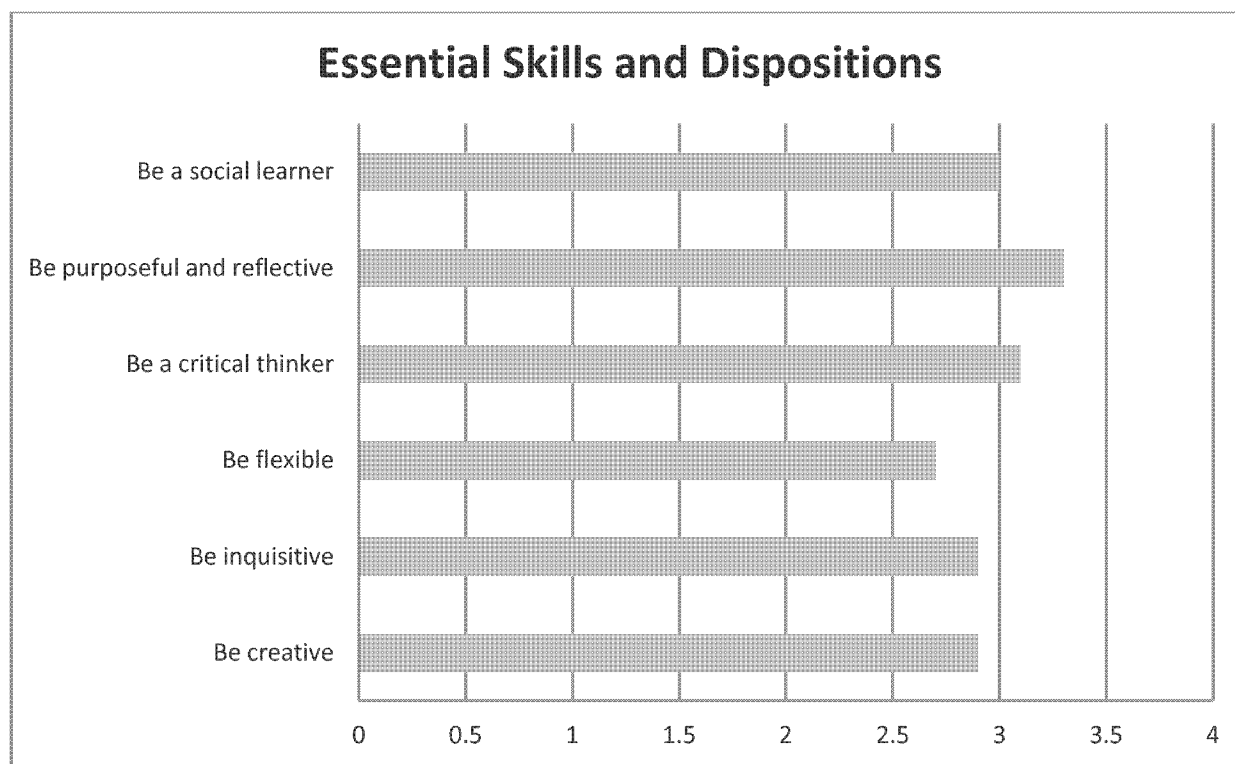


Figure 2. To what extent are the essential skills and dispositions reflected in the draft standards (0 = not at all to 4=very well captured).

³ Reviewers were also asked to evaluate how important each disposition is in fostering lifelong learning and 21st century skills. Reviews rated each from 0 (not very important) to 3 (very important). The average rating for “be creative” was the lowest (2.6), all other dispositions had average ratings from 2.8 to 3.0 for all other dispositions.

Do the Standards Reflect What is Known about Early Childhood Development?

The domains of development serve as the frame for the draft standards, and as noted above, reviewers tended to recognize that these were generally adequate and reflected important areas of child development. It is within the standards, at the indicator level, where expectations for children at different ages are articulated, and this provides the best level of analysis to determine the degree to which the standards (really the sequencing of indicators across ages) reflect what is known about child development. Reviewers were asked to evaluate the indicators for each standard with regards to two study questions: Do the standards reflect the known process of development and sequences of learning for each standard? And, are the standards appropriate to the identified age period? Reviewers were also asked to provide comments related to each of these study questions. In this section, both their overall appraisal of the indicators (across domains) and summaries comments are provided.

Overall

As shown in table 14, reviewers generally agreed that the standards (as defined by their indicators) reflect what is known about child development, and that the standards are appropriate to children at different ages. There are some domains, however, about which reviewers indicated some disagreement with these statements.

Table 14. Number of reviewers indicating strong agreement, agreement, or disagreement that standards indicate what is known about processes of development, and that standards are appropriate to the identified age.

Domain	Standards reflect what is known about developmental processes			Standards are appropriate to the identified age		
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Approaches to Learning	3	6		2	7	
Cognitive	5	3	1	4	5	
Creative Arts & Expression	3	5		3	4	
Language	3	3	2	2	5	1
Literacy	2	6	2	1	8	1
Logic & Reasoning	4	5		4	5	
Mathematics	5	5		4	5	1
Physical Development & Health	4	3		3	4	
Science	4	5		3	6	
Social & Emotional	2	7		2	7	
Social Studies	3	4	1	2	5	1

While there was general agreement that the indicators were appropriate, reviewers provided approximately 350 comments about the indicators. The comments related to indicators within each domain are briefly outlined below. But there were several themes among the comments reviewers

made related to indicators that apply across domains. The broad comments that speak to issues related to dual language learners, children with disabilities, and children from diverse cultural backgrounds are summarized further in this report. Other recurrent themes are summarized here.

- *Layout of indicators within domains.* At the broadest level, reviewers highlighted central challenges to the preparation and presentation of standards. Many noted concerns about how teachers would “read” the documents. Many reviewers assumed that teachers would read the standards as they did – across rows within each table. In many instances, reviewers saw a clear developmental trajectory, but in others they did. This led to questions about how the standards would be read across age bands.
- *Layout of indicators within sub-domains.* Within different domains, there were comments about the inclusion of specific indicators within specific sub-domains. In most cases, the importance and validity of the indicator were not questioned so much the degree to which it fit within a given sub-domain (or even domain, at times). Like the comments about layout across age bands, the general concern was on how the standards would be used.
- *Linking learning and developmental outcomes with teacher activities.* Reviewers noted imbalance in how indicators were presented with regards to clearly delineating the expected child outcomes and the role of the teacher or provider. The need for linking outcome with experience provided by the program was clearly valued, but reviewers noted that this was typically either consistently built-in to a single document, or more typically, the outcome standards were identified in one document and a second document linked experiences that support them. For example, one reviewer noted the importance of phrases like “learning experiences will support children to...” because they underscore the shaped, rather than maturationist, nature of the standards.
- *Assessing when indicators are met.* There was not a great deal of attention paid to assessment (although several reviewers commented at this at different times), but the broader issue – identifying when, and how, a standard, is met was raised frequently. In addition to some indicators that may be difficult to measure generally (e.g., attachment), reviewers noted that some indicators focused on “understanding” while others focused on “doing.” These are two closely related, but separate issues for young children whose understanding may precede their doing.
- *“Guides, not gates.”* While the draft standards documents (and the orientation to reviewers) underscored the intent that the standards be illustrative, and serve as “guides, not gates,” reviewers seemed to have mixed reactions when this intention was manifest in the indicators. One reviewer noted that although this intention “...is understandable and appreciated; the result is too often ambiguity that helps few.”
- *Differences in tone and specificity.* Reviewers noted that across the domains, indicators are written with more or less specificity. They also noted the large differences in the number of indicators across domains and across age bands. Certainly some of this reflects differences in our knowledge of child development. But differences in writing style also contribute to these differences. As is often the case when standards are written by multiple groups, a common voice is difficult to achieve.

Domain-specific Comments

As noted earlier, the complete set of reviewer comments has been provided to the Cabinet for their ongoing review and use. These comments include many minor edits or suggestions for re-wording that do not have any substantive implications for the standards. A brief summary of important substantive comments from reviewers from within each domain is given here.

Approaches to Learning

Reviewers provided 42 comments related to the approaches to learning indicators. This included 31 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Internal verses external indicators* – Several comments noted that this domain blends individual-focused outcomes (i.e., “self-” related) as well as other-focused. It was suggested that to the extent that “other-directed” indicators are used, they maybe better placed within the social domain somehow.
- *Careful wording to avoid confusion* – reviewers earlier noted some lack of consensus in what makes this construct, and perhaps some of that confusion plays out with potentially confusing wording.

Cognitive

Reviewers provided 18 comments related to the cognitive development indicators. This included 14 indicator-specific comments. There was not one or more clear themes in reviewer comments on indicators in this domain. One reviewer’s comment, that this is “well done,” may be suggestive. Although not a reviewer comment, it must be noted that the cognitive domain for children birth to age 3 is called-out in comments from reviewers in their evaluation of domains introduced for older children, so comments in those domains may have applicability here as the draft standards and any revisions are consider moving ahead.

Creative Arts & Expression

Reviewers provided 30 comments related to the creative arts and expression indicators. This included 27 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Misplaced indicators* – Several indicators were suggested to be more appropriately placed within other domains.
- *Sensitivity to diversity* – Several comments noted the cultural influences in the creative arts, or the apparent physical demands of some of the indicators.

Language

Reviewers provided 49 comments related to the language indicators. This included 35 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Distinguishing between vocabulary size and vocabulary content* – Multiple reviewers noted that including within the same indicator an estimated vocabulary range as well as descriptive text about the nature of vocabulary at the same age is potentially confusing and misleading.

- *Vocabulary size* – Reviewers noted that the estimated ranges for vocabulary size are potentially problematic. First, there is no recognition of the distinction between receptive and expressive vocabulary. Second, there is no rationale given for the ranges identified. This is especially important for children who are dual language learners (for whom vocabulary is developing in multiple languages) and children with disabilities (who may have limitations in receptive, expressive, or both vocabularies related to the specific disability). Finally, reviewers raised concerns about how this would be measured for all children.
- *Relative weakness of indicators for infants and toddlers* – Several comments reflected the apparent imbalance of indicators for older compared with young children. One reviewer pointed out that this is in part due to reliance on productive oral language, which is more prevalent as children get older (and also more challenging or not appropriate for some children with disabilities).
- *Accommodations for dual language learners and children with disabilities* – A large number of the indicator comments represent modest modifications to the language of indicators to allow for broader interpretation of when a child can demonstrate (and how) a specific outcome. These tend to be related to accommodating children with special needs, but also dual language learners, and pre-verbal infants and toddlers.

Literacy

Reviewers provided 23 comments related to the literacy indicators. This included 11 indicator-specific comments. There was no clear theme among the reviewer comments, except in so far as reviewers called for recognition of variation in dual language learners. Reviewers also reiterated earlier points that literacy development begins (and is observable) earlier (and indeed is included earlier within the language domain).

Logic & Reasoning

Reviewers provided 13 comments related to the logic and reasoning indicators. This included 6 indicator-specific comments. One theme emerged from the reviewer comments:

- *Placement of the indicators of this domain* – The reviewers had few specific comments about indicators within this domain but many wondered if it were necessary to have logic and reasoning as a stand-alone domain, with reviewers suggesting that the content of this domain could live within one of the other domains (noted were mathematics, science, or a general cognitive domain).

Mathematics

Reviewers provided 44 comments related to the mathematics indicators. This included 33 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Aligning to other standards* – Reviewers noted that standards for mathematics (K-12) have been developed by the National Council for the Teachers of Mathematics as well as the Common Core State Standards.

- *Mathematics birth-3 years* – Reviewers argued that precursor mathematics skills (prior to 3-years of age) are not adequately considered. Where they are included in standards for younger children (e.g., in the cognition domain) they may need better cross-referencing or other reinforcement that mathematical development occurs prior to age 3-years.
- *The role and use of non-standard units of measurement* - Reviewers pointed out that although the empirical evidence to support use of non-standards units is weak, they are commonly used in practice.

Physical Development & Health

Reviewers provided 26 comments related to the physical development and health indicators. This included 16 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Child outcome or program feature?* – Several comments converged on the difference between what a child may be expected to know or do and what are characteristics of children that reflect more about the programs that serve them (or their home life). Several specific indicators were identified by reviewers.
- *Critical to make accommodations for children with disabilities* – Several reviewers noted that the focus on motor skills will present obvious challenges for children with some disabilities.
- *Developmental progression* – Several comments referred to the presence or absence of any obvious developmental progression within what appear to be rows across age bands.

Science

Reviewers provided 19 comments related to the science indicators. This included 7 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Alignment with standards* – One reviewer noted the recently released Next Generation Science Standards to which these standards should align.
- *Level(s) of specificity* – Reviewers generally noted the high quality and precision in the science indicators. This led directly to some questions about the level of specificity of some areas of knowledge (e.g., shadows) and the non-presence of other areas (e.g., environmental science, time).

Social & Emotional

Reviewers provided 133 comments related to the social and emotional indicators. This included 111 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Assessment challenges* – Several comments reflect concerns about assessing children’s progress against indicators within this standard. Some of the indicators are suggested to be too vague, others appear to require substantial input and experience of the child outside of the early care and education program so would be hard to measure.

- *Developmental progression* – As with other domains, reviews struggled to determine whether rows represent expected developmental progressions, or related, but age-differentiated, outcomes.
- *Too many indicators?*– Reviewers noted the large number of sub-domains and indicators within this domain. They suggested that this large number not only created a lack of numeric parity with other domains but also introduced potential challenges with conceptualization. Indeed, one reviewer suggested that if social and emotional were separate domains, there would be fewer indicators within the domain and they may fit together more coherently.
- *Focus on negative outcomes* – Several reviewers commented that a large number of the indicators seemed to be focused on what are generally considered negative behaviors rather than focusing on nurturing positive social and emotional skills.

Social Studies

Reviewers provided 21 comments related to the social studies indicators. This included 13 indicator-specific comments. Themes that emerged within these comments include the following:

- *Alignment with standards* – One reviewer noted the National Council for Social Studies framework to which these standards should align.
- *Opportunity to enhance cultural competence* – Reviewers noted that issues related to cultural diversity would naturally live within the social studies domain, but that many opportunities to show these connections were not taken.
- *Social studies and the immediate and larger community* – Reviewers provided conflicting views about the placement (but not necessarily the importance) of a focus on classroom community within the social studies domain or the social and emotional domain.

Coverage Across Age Bands

A final way to consider how the draft standards reflect what is known about development is to consider the degree to which they capture key outcomes at different development periods of early childhood. The draft standards provide indicators across the early childhood years, with age bands capturing birth-6 months, 6-12 months, 12-18 months, 18-24 months, 2-3 years, 3-4 years, and 4-5 years. Reviewers were asked to evaluate how adequately the standards (collectively) described child development across the age bands.

As shown in figure 3, overall, reviewers indicated that the standards were mostly or very adequate in describing development across age bands. There were some interesting differences in how the standards were perceived based upon the age band, however. More reviewers reported that the standards were less than adequate, or only adequate for the youngest bands (0-18 months) then again at 3-4 years. For older bands, however, reviewers were more apt to report that the standards were very or mostly adequate in describing child development (2 years and above). Across age bands there was a single reviewer with the persistent view that the standards were less than adequate in describing child development.

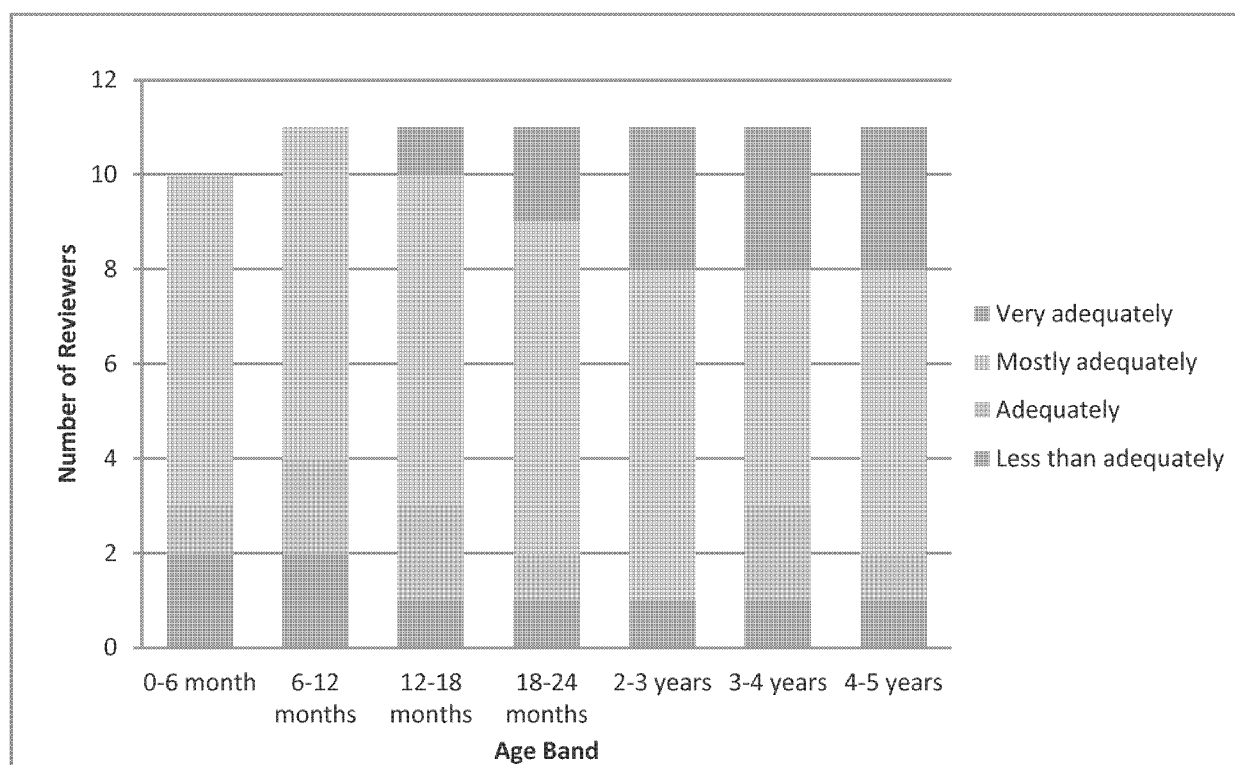


Figure 3. To what extent do the early learning standards adequately describe development within each age band?

The reviewers' comments related to the age bands illuminates some of these broad ratings. First, one drive behind the persistent viewpoint that the standards were less than adequate was apparently driven in part by the close linkage of indicators to age band that may not accommodate diversity across children, especially those with disabilities (more on that below). Second, reviewers' commented that some of the domains were introduced only for the older children (3-4 and 4-5-year-olds) with related earlier developmental milestones not as well represented, so the apparent "emergence" of these domains later underscored a perceived lack of attention in the standards applied during earlier age bands. Likewise, several reviewers noted that if one considers only the number of indicators for each age band, there is an apparent increase across the age bands. One result may be the comparative number of domains and/or indicators at different ages may be interpreted as a reflection of how well important learning and development outcomes are at different ages. In the draft standards reviewed here, for example, there were 6 domains and 54 and 60 indicators for the two youngest age bands, and 10 domains and 122 and 125 indicators for the two oldest age bands. The challenge of reconciling the number of indicators at each age and the relative importance of each age is revisited in the final section of this report.

Do the Standards Account for Diversity?

As the American population has continued its trend towards increasing diversity, policy-makers and practitioners in early childhood education have worked towards providing programs to meet the needs of children from homes where English is not spoken (or is not the primary language), children with disabilities, and children from diverse cultural backgrounds. States' efforts at developing early learning standards have likewise grappled with developing standards that are appropriate for the diverse populations of children and families served by early childhood programs. The NAEYC and NAECS/SDE (2002) position statement on early learning standards anticipated the need for recognizing diversity, and encouraged those developing standards to ensure that they are appropriate for all children.

At the broadest level, reviewers were asked, "Overall, do the standards adequately account for diversity in community, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and developmental abilities?" Half of the reviewers responded that these standards did account for diversity; three reviewers (25%) indicated that they did not; and three reviewers did not respond to this question (i.e., they responded "don't know"). However, this over-arching question lacks the resolution to provide useful feedback on the draft standards. Reviewers were further asked more detailed questions about the degree to which the standards addressed the needs of dual language learners, children with disabilities, and children from diverse cultural backgrounds. They were asked to evaluate the degree to which the draft standards met this expectation and provide commentary on areas of strength and weakness in doing so.

Dual Language Learners

The extent to which the draft standards address the needs of dual language learners can be addressed in two ways. First, the content of the standards across all domains can be examined for their suitability for children who are dual language learners. Second, Connecticut has taken an additional step, one becoming more common across states, of developing a set of standards, or a framework, specifically for children who are dual language learners. This framework can also be evaluated to ensure that its content is consistent with current understanding of the development of dual language learners.

Dual Language Learners and the Draft Standards

One means of evaluating how well the standards meet the needs of dual language learners is through an evaluation of the degree to which the indicators in each domain can accommodate the needs of dual language learners. Reviewers were asked to rate the degree to which the standards did so on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 3 (very well). The average rating for each domain is shown in figure 4. In general, reviewers scored the standards as meeting the needs of dual language learners between "somewhat well" (score of 1) and "very well" (score of 3), though the scores for language, literacy, social and emotional, and social studies were closer to the "somewhat well" score. In addition, only one reviewer scored any domain as meeting the needs of dual language learners "not at all well."

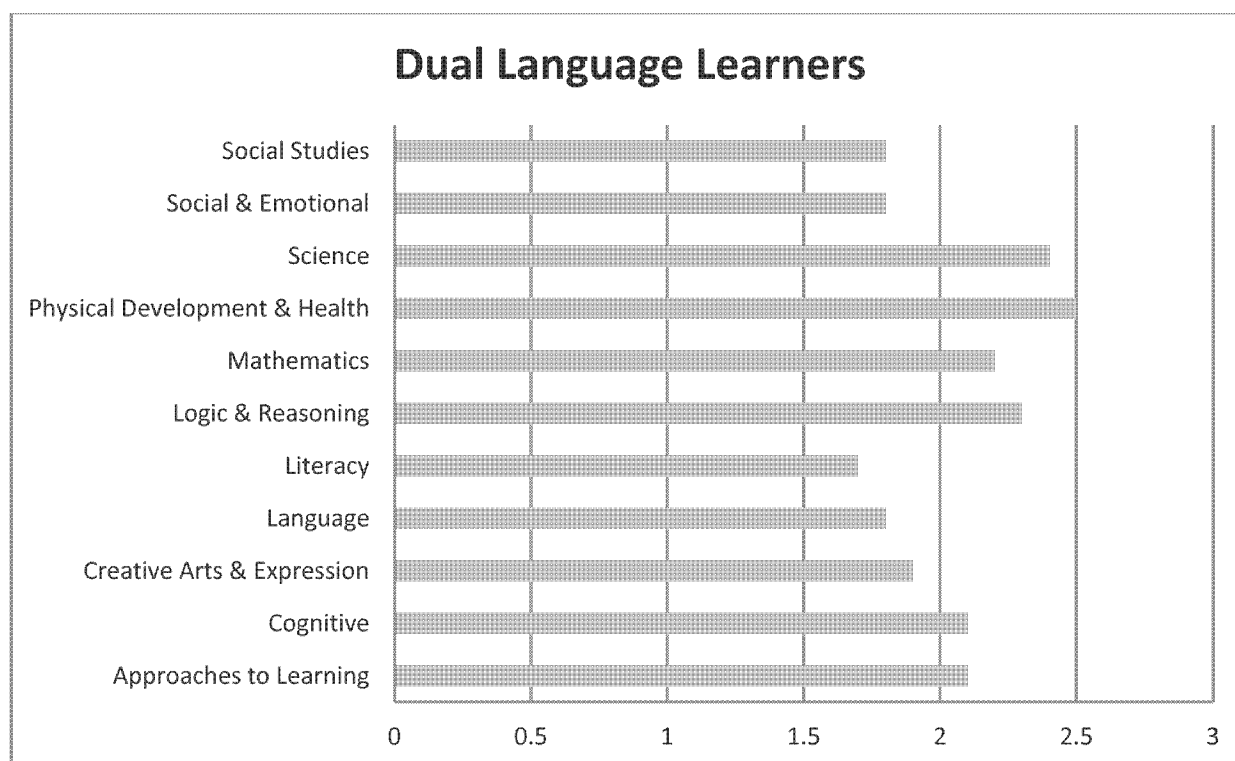


Figure 4. How well do the standards accommodate the needs of Dual Language Learners? Scored 0 (not at all) to 3 (very well).

These generally moderate ratings were given more nuance in reviewers' comments about specific indicators. Comments about the language and literacy indicators tended to underscore the potential for dual language learners to be delayed relative to their English-only speaking peers, so these indicators need to accommodate that variation. Within the social studies, and in some ways within the social and emotional domain, the inter-mingling of linguistic and cultural diversity appear, with concerns about cultural appropriateness. Importantly, even while reviewers lauded Connecticut for including a framework specific to dual language learners, and this framework was also generally well-received (see below), reviewers also acknowledged the depth of challenge in constructing standards that are appropriate for dual language learners and native English learning children. As one reviewer commented, the needs for dual language learners are not explicitly described within the standards (which is also the case for children with disabilities, as discussed below), and doing so may create a cumbersome document. But, the reviewer continues, it may be possible to adjust indicators to be less dependent upon English-only language competence for children to demonstrate they have met the standards.

The Framework for Dual Language Learners

As noted above, the draft standards include a framework for considering development dual language learners as a supplement to the Early Learning and Development Standards. This framework includes 3 over-arching domains as well as several sub-domains. Reviewers were asked to evaluate this framework as well as the domains, sub-domains, and indicators.

When asked if the framework for dual language learners provides an appropriate progression (beginning, middle, later), 10 of the 12 reviewers (83%) responded “yes.” If a reviewer indicated “no” he or she was asked to provide commentary. With regards to the progression, the concern seemed to be that there was limited attention given to the importance of maintaining home language while working on English. One reviewer noted that this model is similar to that being developed by the WIDA group (www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx), suggesting that some alignment might be possible with the work of that group.

Reviewers were also asked to evaluate the domains, sub-domains, and indicators. Two of the reviewers indicated that they did not have the expertise to evaluate, so these results are based upon a set of 10 reviewers. All of these reviewers agreed (5 reviewers) or strongly agreed (5 reviewers) that the domains and sub-domains included in the framework adequately captured important content for DLL children. When the indicators were considered, 9 of the reviewers agreed (5 reviewers) or strongly agreed (4 reviewers) that they represented an appropriate developmental progression, while 1 reviewer disagreed. Similarly 7 of the reviewers agreed (4 reviewers) or strongly agreed (3 reviewers) that the indicators were age appropriate for most DLL children and 3 reviewers disagreed. In comments, several themes seemed to underlie this diversity of viewpoints. First, several reviewers pointed out that the indicators within framework were not presented in a way directly linked with age, although this did not drive concerns about age appropriateness. Instead, what seemed to be driving concerns in this regard were comments about the appropriateness of certain indicators for very young children (especially some of those in the beginning period), or the apparent silence of the indicators with regards to age. As one reviewer commented, the progression may be right, but age of the child, period within the progression, and degree to which home and second languages are supported would all interact to drive that child’s development of first and second language. This string of comments, and others, underscored the challenge of mapping what was generally considered a good progression onto child age, when both the “start” age for children into the progression, and length of time a child would spend within each period of progression, can vary and affect the age at which a child will demonstrate competence against any of the indicators.

Children with Disabilities

Reviewers were asked to evaluate the degree to which the standards meet the needs of children with disabilities on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 3 (very well). The average rating for each domain is shown in figure 5. In general, reviewers scored the standards as meeting the needs of children with disabilities just better than “somewhat well.” The average scores across all domains ranged between 1.5 and 2.0 between “somewhat well” (score of 1) and “not very well” (score of 2). Overall, this suggests that there is certainly room for improving the standards in how they may address the needs of children with disabilities.

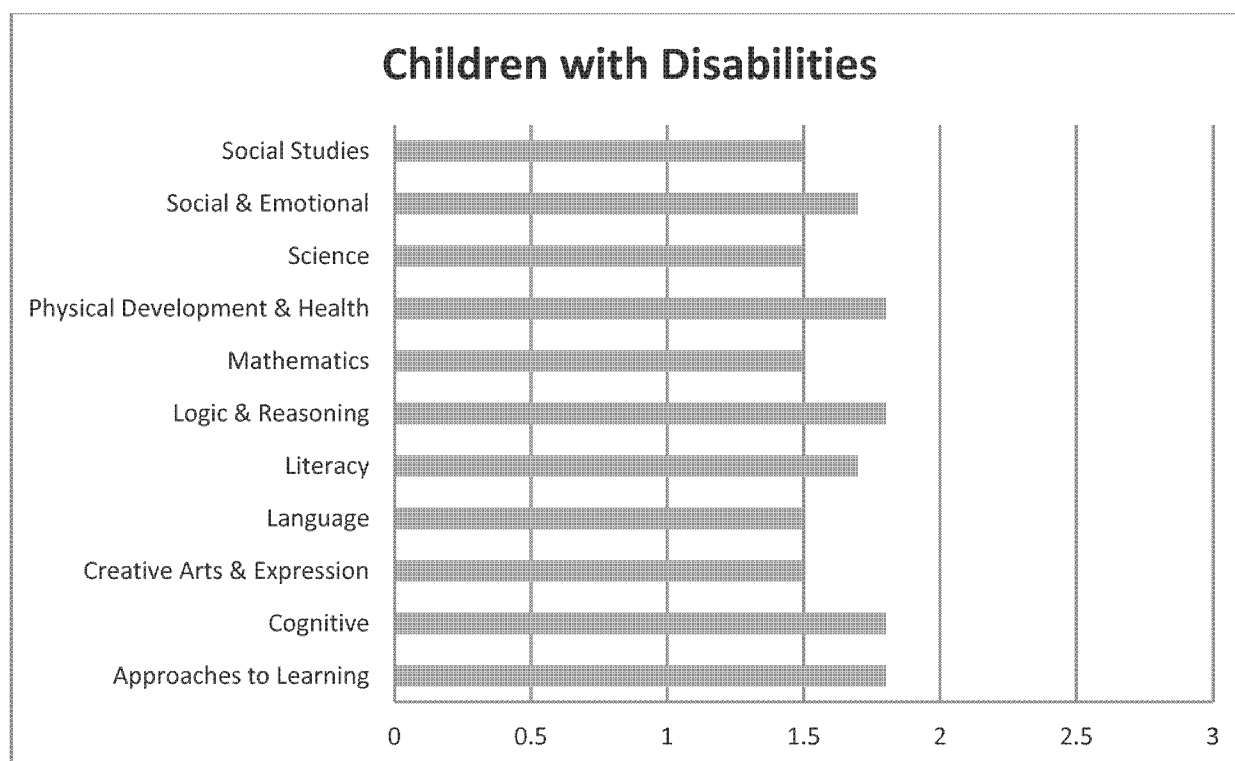


Figure 5. How well do the standards accommodate the needs of children with disabilities? Scored 0 (not at all) to 3 (very well).

Reviewer comments provide both important contexts for these relatively low scores as well as areas of improvement. One theme among the general comments is the fact that “children with disabilities” reflects a broad range of diverse developmental issues. Reviewers pointed out that this breadth of conditions presents a challenge in developing fully inclusive standards. However, several reviewers indicated that they did not see any accommodation for children with disabilities included at all in many standards where they felt such accommodation could be possible. Reviewers also pointed out that some disabilities may have greater impact on children’s potential to meet standards in some areas but not others. One example to underscore this point was provided for the circumstance of children with autism – by its nature, autism affects children’s language and social and emotional development the most, and may or may not be accompanied by any general cognitive deficits. Finally, any concern about accommodation to meet the standards was differentiated from concerns about assessment. The issue of providing instruction for children disabilities to address learning and developmental goals was not seen as the same as assessing children’s achievement of certain standards.

Many reviewers’ comments (both general and attached to specific indicators) provide direct suggestions for revisions in language (if not content). At the broadest level, reviewers noted that there is a universal design vernacular and approach that can be applied to the content of the current standards, very likely with little change in meaning but with improvement in accommodation for children with disabilities. Many of the specific comments reflect this larger frame for children with disabilities, as suggestions

were made to broaden the ways in which children may show competence that are less dependent on typical development.

Cultural Diversity

Reviewers were asked to evaluate the degree to which the standards allow for cultural variation on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 3 (very well). The average rating for each domain is shown in figure 6. In general, reviewers scored the standards accommodating cultural variations short of very well, but better than somewhat well. The average scores across all domains ranged between 1.7 and 2.1, between “somewhat well” (score of 1) and “not very well” (score of 2). Overall, this suggests a mixed-bag in how well the standards address the needs of children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

As above, reviewers’ comments help illuminate this pattern in their ratings. Some comments indicate that the standards are reasonably silent on issues of cultural diversity, with some sense that they are focused on majority, middle-class children. This criticism is somewhat offset by reviewers’ comments questioning whether the standards need to include language to deal address cultural diversity or if it a general, over-arching statement that needs to be included regarding the standards (that is, that teachers should respect cultural diversity inn working with children), or that this is really an implementation or teaching issue, not a standards issue.

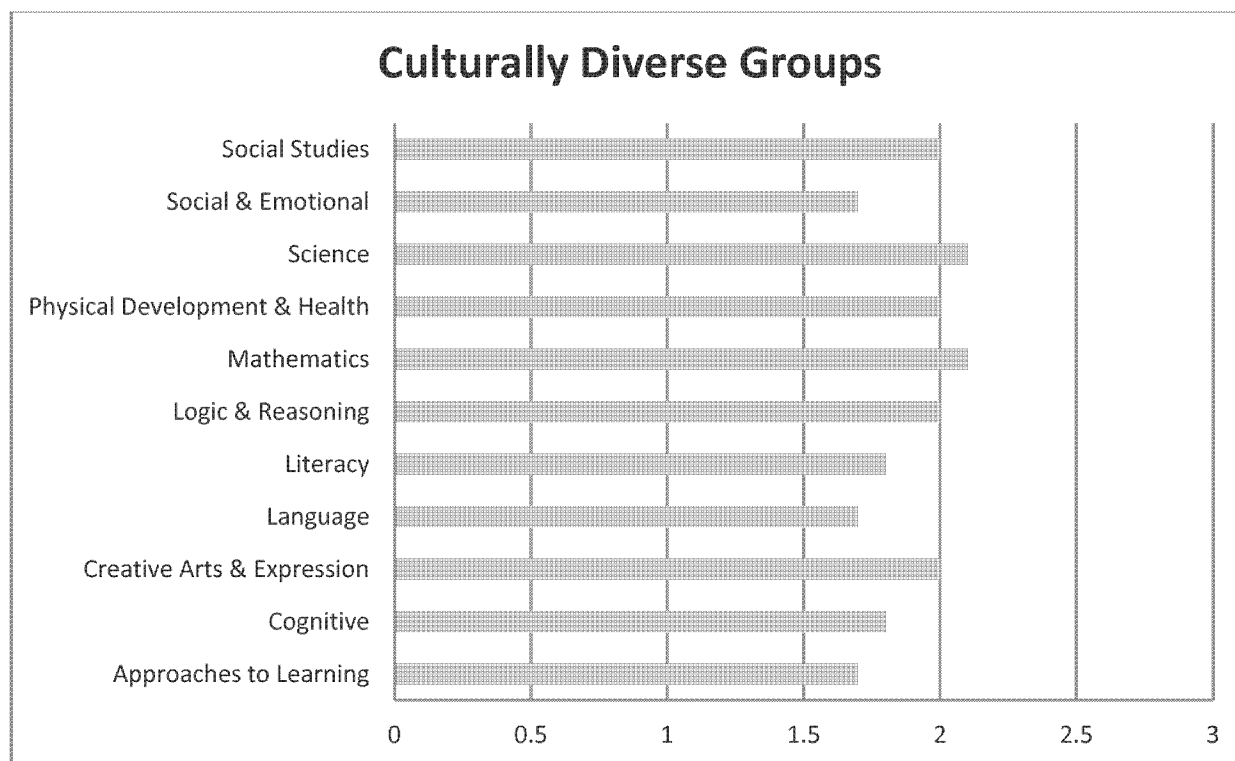


Figure 6. How well do the standards accommodate the needs of children from cultural diverse backgrounds? Scored 0 (not at all) to 3 (very well).

Themes Across Linguistic, Cultural, and Developmental Diversity

Certainly the linguistic, cultural, and developmental diversity discussions above represent differing (though potentially overlapping) groups of children, so concerns may be specific to groups of children. When looking at reviewer ratings, the standards accommodated the needs for children with special needs less well than they did the needs of dual language learners and for children from diverse cultural backgrounds. However, as noted above, reviewers made numerous recommendations for revisions that could fairly easily improve the appropriateness of many of the indicators, especially for children with special needs.

While the overall ratings of the standards differed across diverse groups, there were some striking similarities in how reviewers responded to the items about meeting the needs of diverse groups of children that seem to apply to all. First, reviewers noted the special additional documentation provided for dual language learners in the framework. This framework was viewed in a generally positive light, even leading reviewers to suggest comparable documents be developed to reflect cultural diversity and the needs of children with disabilities as well. At the same time, reviewers questioned the separation this document created, and argued that the indicators within the draft standards should be revised to incorporate the needs of diverse students. In short the needs of diverse groups of children should be incorporated into, not appended to, the core set of standards. But one reviewer did note that the resulting document could be overly burdensome to be used. However, dozens of comments provided by reviewers to the indicators across all domains provide very specific revisions that could be made with minimal impact to the document that would broaden the appropriateness of indicators to diverse groups of children. These have not been listed within this document, but have been provided to the Cabinet for use revising the draft standards.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This content review was undertaken following a process that calls upon experts to provide guided feedback on the quality of the domains, sub-domains, and indicators. This process wielded a remarkable wealth of expert commentary on the draft standards. At the same time, reviewers repeatedly recognized the quality of the draft standards (one reviewer said, in effect, the standards are great despite the number of comments). Overall, the reviewers' ratings and extensive commentary suggest that the draft standards are very strong and appropriate.

Many of the comments provided by the reviewers warrant consideration from the Early Childhood Cabinet and the multiple stakeholders in Connecticut that will be working with the standards as they are implemented. It is not the intent of this report to supersede the capacity and authority of those groups in making recommendations about specific standards. However, it is the intent of this report to provide some concluding observations and recommendations that can guide the Cabinet and its collaborators in refining and implementing these standards. Considering the wealth of comments provided by reviewers, the following recommendations arise:

- *Revisions can be made to indicators, some more readily than others.*

The complete set of reviewer comments has been provided to the Cabinet. As noted in this report, these include numerous edits and suggested word or phrasing alternatives. These suggestions would seem to be relatively easy to implement, and non-controversial. However, other comments speak to substantive issues, oftentimes within very specific areas of child development. In this review, all comments are reported, irrespective of the source, so it is likely necessary to compile those comments that demand additional expert review, and seek further possibly specific, expertise to provide additional thoughts on possible revisions.

- *Conduct focus groups to learn how the standards are interpreted by teachers, directors, and other stakeholders.*

A broad theme among the comments, whether made in considering domains, sub-domains, or indicators, was the “fuzzy” boundary between different areas of children’s development, and the challenge of organizing standards within these semi-permeable categories. Reviewers noted repeatedly that this structural challenge may affect how the standards are viewed and implemented.

- *Evaluate the viability of logic and reasoning as a separate domain.*

One interesting result of this review is that the domain for logic and reasoning was rated as important, as were its sub-domains. Reviewers also generally indicated that the indicators represented what is known about the developmental progression and that they were age-appropriate. Yet in comments, reviewers wondered whether logic and reasoning should be its own domain, or whether it should be collapsed within the cognitive domain. This is clearly a question that should be further examined.

- *Provide guidance on inter-connectedness of domains, and expand cross-referencing as appropriate.*

This is closely related to the finding above about the overlap between different domains and/or sub-domains. For example, if logic and reasoning is retained as a broad domain, it would benefit from clearer statements of its relationship with other domains, as well as additional cross-referencing among indicators, as warranted. A similar consideration may be given to the approaches to learning domain, as well as reviewer comments about the structure of the social and emotional domain. Certainly the content of these standards (i.e., indicators) was considered both important and reasonably well-done, so regardless of modifications in the structure of the domains and sub-domains, these indicators would seem important and appropriate enough to be retained.

- *Achieving parity in indicators across age bands.*

When reviewers were asked about how adequately the standards described important learning and developmental outcomes at each age band, they tended to see the older age bands as very well or mostly adequately described by the standards, with younger age bands adequately or less than

adequately described. In reviewing their comments, one factor that may have contributed to this is the number of indicators (and domains) present for each age. This creates an interesting challenge to standards writers – must there be parity in the number of indicators across ages to ensure that each age is valued appropriately? A demand for equal numbers of indicators will tend to result in more indicators, rather than fewer. Further, these indicators may not reflect the same amount of learning or development to achieve them. For example, locomotion follows through a series of reasonably discrete periods (including - crawling, walking with support, walking independently) that tend to occur between 9-12 months for most healthy, typically developing children. Yet within a standard to describe mobility, it is possible that only 1 indicator will be included (since indicators tend to typically reflect capabilities at the *end* of an age band). To reconcile this challenge is more likely an issue of training early educators to interpret and implement the standards, rather than working to perpetuate a parity-as-value viewpoint in standards development. There is an opportunity for the Cabinet to start moving the field towards a different view of parity than we have used previously.

- *Build high quality technical assistance and professional development supports to implement the standards.*

The intent of this review was to examine the content of the standards. As noted above, however, an evaluation of the content leads rather quickly into other considerations, especially presentation, and training and technical assistance in implementation. As indicated in the position statement in early learning standards (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE, 2002), the standards exist within this context of training and implementation, as well as assessment. Reviewers were very quiet with regards to assessment. While some comments were made with regards to specific indicators within the social and emotional and approaches to learning domains, in general the reviewers focused specifically on the “what” goal captured by the standards and not how programs, or the state, would develop appropriate assessment systems to inform instruction and guide program improvement. As the state moves ahead with launching its revised standards, reviewers’ suggestions regarding technical assistance should be joined by the less strongly spoken considerations for appropriate assessment to ensure that the standards really play their role as a framework for expectations for children throughout early childhood.

- *Think broadly about meeting the needs of diverse students.*

When reviewers were asked to evaluate the degree to which the standards addressed children with disabilities, children who are dual language learners, and children from diverse cultural backgrounds, their comments suggested the tension between how much of the burden is borne by the standards verses the demands on instruction to ensure that children from diverse backgrounds receive high quality services that support their learning and development outcomes. The NAEYC statement about early standards encourages developers to include consideration within the standards, so there is room for additional discourse within the state to determine how best to assure that the needs of diverse children are met – if they are not written into the standards, where is the guidance or the assurance that these children’s needs will be valued and met?

- *Continue to engage stakeholders.*

One striking feature of the draft standards, not specifically the subject of this review, is the degree to which numerous stakeholders in the state (and elsewhere) have been engaged. This approach is consistent with NAEYC's stated goals for standards development, and should be continued.

Stakeholders may be engaged in ongoing review and revision of standards, as partners in pilot-testing standards, assessments, professional development or other wrap-around, or to be engaged to conduct any number of potential research studies.

There are two potentially conflicting conclusion that the Cabinet could draw from this review. On the one hand, reviewers provided copious commentary, most of it specific and critical. On the other hand, in nearly all instances that reviewers provided ratings-based feedback, and in open commentary, reviews praised the quality of the standards. Perhaps these results provide less conflicting, and more synergistic, feedback. After all, noting the quality of work already completed allows the reviewers to press the Cabinet and its stakeholders and partners to go even further. Indeed, this dual conclusion is possibly the best conclusion one could hope for from a content validity study of this kind - recognition from experts of well done work while simultaneously pressing for further improvement. Certainly, the review panel has provided both the recognition and the depth and sophistication of feedback that will enable the draft standards to continue to be refined to become important tools guiding the early care and education field in Connecticut to ensuring all children have experiences to support their learning and development.

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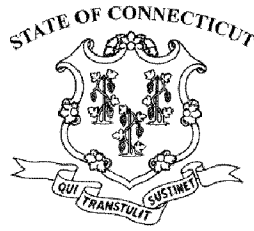
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Public Act No. 13-178

AN ACT CONCERNING THE MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OF YOUTHS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2013*) (a) (1) The Commissioner of Children and Families, in consultation with representatives of the children and families served by the department, providers of mental, emotional or behavioral health services for children and families, advocates, and others interested in the well-being of children and families in this state, shall develop a comprehensive implementation plan, across agency and policy areas, for meeting the mental, emotional and behavioral health needs of all children in the state, and preventing or reducing the long-term negative impact of mental, emotional and behavioral health issues on children. In developing the implementation plan, the department shall include, at a minimum, the following strategies to prevent or reduce the long-term negative impact of mental, emotional and behavioral health issues on children:

- (A) Employing prevention-focused techniques, with an emphasis on early identification and intervention;
- (B) Ensuring access to developmentally-appropriate services;
- (C) Offering comprehensive care within a continuum of services;

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(D) Engaging communities, families and youths in the planning, delivery and evaluation of mental, emotional and behavioral health care services;

(E) Being sensitive to diversity by reflecting awareness of race, culture, religion, language and ability;

(F) Establishing results-based accountability measures to track progress towards the goals and objectives outlined in this section and sections 2 to 7, inclusive, of this act;

(G) Applying data-informed quality assurance strategies to address mental, emotional and behavioral health issues in children;

(H) Improving the integration of school and community-based mental health services; and

(I) Enhancing early interventions, consumer input and public information and accountability by (i) in collaboration with the Department of Public Health, increasing family and youth engagement in medical homes; (ii) in collaboration with the Department of Social Services, increasing awareness of the 2-1-1 Infoline program; and (iii) in collaboration with each program that addresses the mental, emotional or behavioral health of children within the state, insofar as they receive public funds from the state, increasing the collection of data on the results of each program, including information on issues related to response times for treatment, provider availability and access to treatment options.

(2) Not later than April 15, 2014, the commissioner shall submit and present a status report on the progress of the implementation plan, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children and appropriations.

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(3) On or before October 1, 2014, the commissioner shall submit and present the implementation plan, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children and appropriations.

(4) On or before October 1, 2015, and biennially thereafter through and including 2019, the department shall submit and present progress reports on the status of implementation, and any data-driven recommendations to alter or augment the implementation in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor and the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children and appropriations.

(b) Emergency mobile psychiatric service providers shall collaborate with community-based mental health care agencies, school-based health centers and the contracting authority for each local or regional board of education throughout the state, utilizing a variety of methods, including, but not limited to, memoranda of understanding, policy and protocols regarding referrals and outreach and liaison between the respective entities. These methods shall be designed to (1) improve coordination and communication in order to enable such entities to promptly identify and refer children with mental, emotional or behavioral health issues to the appropriate treatment program, and (2) plan for any appropriate follow-up with the child and family.

(c) Local law enforcement agencies and local and regional boards of education that employ or engage school resource officers shall, provided federal funds are available, train school resource officers in nationally-recognized best practices to prevent students with mental health issues from being victimized or disproportionately referred to the juvenile justice system as a result of their mental health issues.

(d) The Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with

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agencies that provide training for mental health care providers in urban, suburban and rural areas, shall provide phased-in, ongoing training for mental health care providers in evidence-based and trauma-informed interventions and practices.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2013*) The Office of Early Childhood, as established in section 1 of substitute house bill 6359 of the current session, in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families, shall provide, to the extent that private, federal or philanthropic funding is available, professional development training to pediatricians and child care providers to help prevent and identify mental, emotional and behavioral health issues in children by utilizing the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Competencies, or a similar model, with a focus on maternal depression and its impact on child development.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2013*) The birth-to-three program, established under section 17a-248b of the general statutes and administered by the Department of Developmental Services, shall provide mental health services to any child eligible for early intervention services pursuant to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1431 et seq., as amended from time to time. Any child not eligible for services under said act shall be referred by the program to a licensed mental health care provider for evaluation and treatment, as needed.

Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2013*) The state shall seek existing public or private reimbursement for (1) mental, emotional and behavioral health care services delivered in the home and in elementary and secondary schools, and (2) mental, emotional and behavioral health care services offered through the Department of Social Services pursuant to the federal Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Program under 42 USC 1396d.

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Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2013*) Not later than December 1, 2014, the Office of Early Childhood, through the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, shall provide recommendations for implementing the coordination of home visitation programs within the early childhood system that offer a continuum of services to vulnerable families with young children, including prevention, early intervention and intensive intervention, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations, human services, education and children. Vulnerable families with young children may include, but are not limited to, those facing poverty, trauma, violence, special health care needs, mental, emotional or behavioral health care needs, substance abuse challenges and teen parenthood. The recommendations shall address, at a minimum:

(1) A common referral process for families requesting home visitation programs;

(2) A core set of competencies and required training for all home visitation program staff;

(3) A core set of standards and outcomes for all programs, including requirements for a monitoring framework;

(4) Coordinated training for home visitation and early care providers, to the extent that training is currently provided, on cultural competency, mental health awareness and issues such as child trauma, poverty, literacy and language acquisition;

(5) Development of common outcomes;

(6) Shared reporting of outcomes, including information on any existing gaps in services, disaggregated by agency and program, which shall be reported annually, pursuant to section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly

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having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations, human services and children;

(7) Home-based treatment options for parents of young children who are suffering from severe depression; and

(8) Intensive intervention services for children experiencing mental, emotional or behavioral health issues, including, but not limited to, relationship-focused intervention services for young children.

Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2013*) (a) The Office of Early Childhood, as established in section 1 of substitute house bill 6359 of the current session, in collaboration with the Departments of Children and Families, Education and Public Health, to the extent that private funding is available, shall design and implement a public information and education campaign on children's mental, emotional and behavioral health issues. Such campaign shall provide:

(1) Information on access to support and intervention programs providing mental, emotional and behavioral health care services to children;

(2) A list of emotional landmarks and the typical ages at which such landmarks are attained;

(3) Information on the importance of a relationship with and connection to an adult in the early years of childhood;

(4) Strategies that parents and families can employ to improve their child's mental, emotional and behavioral health, including executive functioning and self-regulation;

(5) Information to parents regarding methods to address and cope with mental, emotional and behavioral health stressors at various ages of a child's development and at various stages of a parent's work and

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family life;

(6) Information on existing public and private reimbursement for services rendered; and

(7) Strategies to address the stigma associated with mental illness.

(b) Not later than October 1, 2014, and annually thereafter, to the extent that private funding is available under subsection (a) of this section, the Office of Early Childhood shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children and public health on the status of the public information and education campaign implemented pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2013*) (a) The Judicial Branch, in collaboration with the Departments of Children and Families and Correction, may seek public or private funding to perform a study (1) disaggregated by race, to determine whether children and young adults whose primary need is mental health intervention are placed into the juvenile justice or correctional systems rather than receiving treatment for their mental health issues; (2) to determine the consequences that result from inappropriate referrals to the juvenile justice or correctional systems, including the impact of such consequences on the mental, emotional and behavioral health of children and young adults and the cost to the state; (3) to determine the programs that would reduce inappropriate referrals; and (4) to make recommendations to ensure proper treatment is available for children suffering from mental, emotional or behavioral health issues.

(b) Upon completion of the study conducted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the Judicial Branch shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint

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standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations, children and the judiciary on the results of such study.

Sec. 8. (*Effective July 1, 2013*) (a) There is established a Children's Mental Health Task Force to study the effects of nutrition, genetics, complementary and alternative treatments and psychotropic drugs on the mental, emotional and behavioral health of children within the state. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation but shall, within the limits of available funds, be reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties. The task force shall: (1) Study the effects of nutrition, genetics, complementary and alternative treatments and psychotropic drugs on the mental, emotional and behavioral health of children; (2) gather and maintain current information regarding said effects; and (3) advise the General Assembly and Governor concerning the coordination and administration of state programs that may address the impact of said effects on the mental, emotional and behavioral health of children using a results-based accountability framework.

(b) The task force shall consist of the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, and ten members appointed as follows:

(1) A psychologist licensed under chapter 383 of the general statutes, appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

(2) A child psychiatrist licensed to practice medicine in this state, appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;

(3) A licensed and board-certified physician specializing in genetics, appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(4) A public health expert in children's health issues, appointed by

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the minority leader of the Senate;

(5) An educator with expertise providing school-based mental health services in collaboration with community-based mental health service providers, appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

(6) A pediatrician licensed to practice medicine in the state, appointed by the Senate chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children;

(7) A complementary and alternative medicine or integrative therapy expert specializing in the treatment of physical, mental, emotional and behavioral health issues in children, appointed by the House chairperson of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children;

(8) A dietitian-nutritionist licensed under chapter 384b of the general statutes, appointed by the Senate ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children;

(9) A psychotropic pharmacologist, appointed by the House ranking member of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children; and

(10) A pharmacologist, appointed by the Governor.

(c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(d) The chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children shall serve

Substitute Senate Bill No. 972

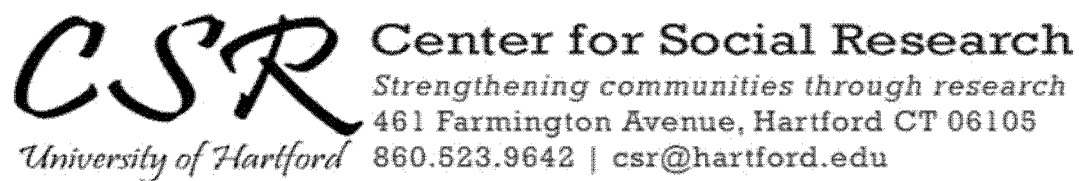
as the chairpersons of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(f) Not later than September 30, 2014, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the Commissioner of Children and Families and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or September 30, 2014, whichever is later.

Approved June 24, 2013

Help Me Grow 2010- 2012 Evaluation Report



Help Me Grow: 2012 Evaluation Report

By

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Executive Summary

The Children's Trust Fund Division at the CT Department of Social Services administers Help Me Grow, working in collaboration with The United Way of Connecticut/211 (the state's telephone information and referral service), the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services' Birth to Three System, the State Department of Education Preschool Special Education Program, and the Department of Public Health's Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) program. The programs work in partnership to facilitate coordinated services. It is through this collaboration that Help Me Grow contributes to a statewide network of triage and referral for those concerned about children's development.

The components of the program include: on-site training for Pediatricians and Family Health Care Providers in early detection of child developmental and behavioral concerns; a statewide toll free telephone number for accessing Child Development Infoline (CDI), part of The United Way of Connecticut/211 system; telephone care coordinators who triage calls, provide referrals and follow up with families; and partnerships with community-based service and advocacy agencies facilitated by the Help Me Grow child development community liaisons.

During the past three programmatic years, 2010, 2011, and 2012, Help Me Grow received a total of 7,370 calls: 2,872 calls in 2010, 2,411 calls in 2011, and 2,087 calls in 2012. For each of the three years, callers were primarily parents (73% in 2012) and pediatricians and other health care providers (18% in 2012). The incremental decrease in the number of calls each year is likely related to the decrease in promotional efforts due to the challenging state budget during this period of time.

An analysis between the 5 Connecticut town groups: Wealthy, Suburban, Rural, Urban Periphery, and Urban Core, (Levy, Don, Rodriguez, & Villemez, 2004) revealed that the majority of families who contacted Help Me Grow reside in the Urban Periphery and Urban Core town groups of Connecticut, similar to previous years. In 2012, the percentage of callers from the Urban Core town group (33%) was disproportionately higher than the percentage of this group's overall population in the state (19%) indicating that Help Me Grow services are reaching high-risk communities.

Over 55% of the calls for each of the past three years were families seeking general information about publicly funded service systems specifically Birth-to-Three (PART C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)), Children and Youth with Special Health Care needs (Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant, Title V of the Social Security Act, and preschool educational services (PART B, IDEA). Child Development Infoline serves as a conduit to these services. However, in many instances, these families have other presenting issues as well. Furthermore, many family concerns do not meet the criteria for these programs. Help Me Grow serves as a supportive net to help all families and in particular to help families who otherwise would "fall through the cracks." The remaining forty-five percent of calls were parents calling with concerns about a child's development or behavior, educational services and/or related family concerns.

When families call Help Me Grow seeking information or advice, care coordinators typically record two or more service requests and/ or presenting issues. Changes in data (i.e.,

documentation of parents concerns) over the past three years indicate that care coordinators have become more “seasoned” and therefore more precise and thorough in determining families’ needs during the intake process. - - While questions about general development issues (i.e., child’s growth and developmental patterns and related inquiries about support services and programs) have steadily decreased from 46% in FY 2010 to 28% in FY2010, care coordinators have documented a steady increase in families calling about: seeking evaluations (from 21% in 2010 to 27% in 2012), concerns regarding child’s social skills or developmentally appropriate emotional behavior, (doubled from 4% in 2010 and 2011 to 8% in 2012), concerns about child’s health care and disability needs, (increased from 15% and 14% in 2010 and 2011 respectively, to 21% in 2012), and educational concerns, in particular requests for special education services (steadily increased from 14% in the 2010 fiscal program year to 25% in 2012).

The top five program referrals for Help Me Grow families for the past three years have consistently been: 1) services related to education needs, mostly preschool special education; 2) the Ages & Stages Child Monitoring Program; 3) services related to disabilities; 4) services for Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs and 5) parent education programs. There was a slight decrease in the number of families entering the Ages and Stages program in 2012 program fiscal year (877 families) compared with 2010 and 2011 (975 and 985 families respectively). This decrease is attributed to the reduced capacity in outreach and training to pediatricians as a result of the challenging state budget in the past years.

Similar to previous years, the rate of successful outcomes (i.e., families who are successfully connected to a service) is over 81% for each of the three previous program years. In comparing positive outcomes between the “5 Connecticuts,” the rate of successful outcomes was higher among wealthier communities (94%) than for poorer communities (79%). Also of interest, the number of incoming and outgoing calls per case between care coordinators and families was higher for families calling from poor communities compared with families living in wealthier communities. This may be attributed to the nature of calls between each of the town groups. Poorer communities request more intervention services whereas calls from wealthier families are more preventative in nature.

In 2012 the Children’s Trust Fund at the Department of Social Services hired a Help Me Grow consultant to HMG who is leading a range of marketing efforts targeted to families, physicians and child care providers as well as a state-wide public awareness campaign. In addition, through the federal Home Visiting Initiative (Department of Public Health grant award), the Help Me Grow call center, Child Development Infoline at United Way, has been awarded a portion of funding to serve as the centralized access point for intake and referrals for home visitation.

Also during 2012 researchers from the University of Hartford evaluated the impact of CT Help Me Grow by examining whether the system is enhancing protective factors and facilitating families’ successful negotiation of risk factors. A recruitment letter and materials that explained the study were sent to parents, 18 years or older, who had accessed Help Me Grow within a 9 month period. Of the 875 families who were invited to participate, 105 returned a completed consent form, and 85 participated in a phone interview during which they completed a 10-item survey rating the ways in which they experienced a positive change. Case notes, completed by care coordinators for each of the participating families, were also analyzed. The survey and analysis were modeled on the five protective factors (parental resilience, social connections,

knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and child social and emotional competence) and related theoretical underpinnings of the Strengthening Families Framework. The average score for the entire sample (N=85) was 3.27. (Ratings ranged from 1 to 4- from least to most positive. The avg. scores for each family ranged from .2 to 4). Factor analyses of survey items indicated that as a result of calling HMG, and the information and services received, what was most important was that families were able to “handle things better,” able to “better understand and meet their children’s needs,” that their “child’s behavior had improved” and that they had a “better understanding of services for their family and child.” These findings indicate that HMG support and linkage to program services enhance protective factors. HMG optimizes child development and long-term child outcomes, as evidenced by its impact on protective factors.

Help Me Grow 2010 - 2012 Annual Evaluation Report

Introduction
Help Me Grow Program

When a provider or family calls Help Me Grow, they are asked a series of questions that help the care coordinator make an assessment and appropriate referrals. The care coordinator researches existing resources or services for the family. Often they will mail parents informational material on child development stages, behaviors, and milestones. In addition, child development community liaisons facilitate networking and partnerships with community-based agencies through outreach and advocacy to maximize use of existing services. They serve as a conduit between the community-based services and the telephone access point.

Children are connected to existing resources, such as primary and specialty medical care, early childhood education, developmental disability services, mental health services, family and social support, and child advocacy providers. The care coordinators provide families with program information that includes a specific name of a contact person and details about services. If necessary, the care coordinator will call the resource and arrange a telephone conference call with the family. The care coordinators also contact the family approximately two weeks after the referral is made to see if they were able to access services, and send a letter to the child health provider to let them know when a family has been connected with a community-based resource. The letters are included in the medical record to prompt discussion with parents regarding development, concerns, and needed services at their next office visit.

Effective since July 2002, Help Me Grow, through the Child Development Infoline, offers families the Ages & Stages (ASQ) Child Monitoring Program designed to screen children for developmental delays. The ASQ is a screening tool completed by parents and used to identify children from four months to five years of age. Families learn about the ASQ from several sources, including child health care providers, the Birth to Three program, and Help Me Grow contacts. Parents fill out an enrollment/consent form and are mailed the ASQ at specified intervals; once they complete the questionnaire, they mail them back for scoring. If no developmental delays are identified, the parent is sent an activity sheet that outlines the next stage of development and what to expect until the next questionnaire is mailed. The consent form includes permission to send the ASQ results to the child's healthcare provider. The provider can then add the results to the child's chart and have a record of development to guide surveillance at subsequent health supervision visits. Community development liaisons also provide information and training for pediatricians and other health care providers on how to encourage parent use of the ASQ developmental screening. With the recent hiring of the Children's Trust Fund Help Me Grow Consultant, a range of promotional efforts are targeted to families, physicians and child care providers. Specifically, an annual statewide campaign is in the planning stages as part of outreach and efforts to raise awareness on the importance of developmental monitoring and the Ages & Stages Child Monitoring program.

SECTION I. *Help Me Grow's* State-Wide System of Early Detection and Care Coordination

In accordance with Connecticut's General Assembly Appropriation Committee, results-based accountability (RBA, Freidman, 2005) provides a framework for Sections I and II of this report; that is, data – or indicators of performance and results - are presented to show where the program's been, and a forecast of where the program is going. Specifically, "baselines" are created that show trends over time. Other measures are used to tell the story behind the baselines and other parts of the program process. Performance measures are organized according to the following:

- "How much did Help Me Grow do?" (i.e., utilization of the program and related data)
- "How well is Help Me Grow doing?" (i.e., family referrals for services and community outreach efforts)
- "Is anyone better off as a result of utilizing Help Me Grow?" (i.e., outcomes and final disposition of cases)

Part A. How much is Help Me Grow doing?

- **Utilization of Help Me Grow:** Number of calls made to Help Me Grow by parents, pediatricians and others with concerns about a child's learning, development or behavior during the past three years (Figure 1 and Table 1).

Figure 1. Who Calls *Help Me Grow*?

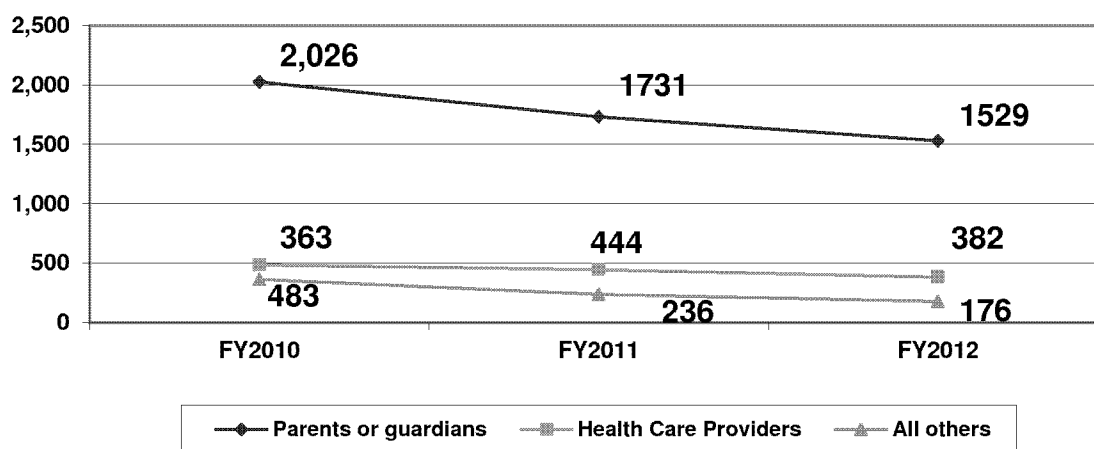


Table 1. Total Number of Callers

FY2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
2,872	2,411	2,087

Figure 1: Summary analysis

- During the 2012 fiscal program year, a total of 2,872 calls were made to Help Me Grow by parents, pediatricians and other providers, and families and friends who were

concerned about a child's behavior, learning, or development. This is a 13% decrease from 2011's fiscal total of 2,411 callers. The decline in the number of callers over the past three years may be attributed to the challenging state budget situation which has impacted outreach efforts (i.e. promoting the program to health care providers and day care providers).

- As with previous years, the majority of callers are parents or guardians (73%). Pediatricians are the second largest group of callers (18%). Of the parents or guardians calling, over 56% are repeating clients and already know about Help Me Grow (See Table 2).
- The remaining callers falling under 'All other' category (9%) are representatives from social service agencies, child care providers, relatives and friends, and callers from the Department of Children and Families. Since the 2011 program year, there has been a 25% decrease of all callers falling within this category. This decrease coincides with the decrease in promotion of the program as noted above.
- **How families learn about the program (Table 2) and the nature of service requests and presenting issues (Table 3).**

Table 2: How Do Parents/ Legal Guardians Learn About Help Me Grow

	Fiscal Year 2010		Fiscal Year 2011		Fiscal Year 2012	
Health care provider	359	18%	326	19%	277	18%
Child care provider	62	3%	64	4%	79	5%
Relative/friend	177	9%	156	9%	105	7%
211 Infoline	239	12%	246	14%	269	18%
Already known	922	46%	760	44%	669	44%
All others	251	12%	178	10%	130	9%
Total	2010	100%	1731	100%	1529	100%

Table 2: Summary analysis

- At this stage of the program (i.e., more than 12 years old), many of the parents have likely used the program in the past and report that they already knew about the program (i.e., as with previous years, 44% of families who called in 2012 already knew about Help Me Grow).
- Compared to 2010 and 2011, there has been a relative increase in 2012 in the percentage of families who heard about Help Me Grow via 211 Infoline, and corresponding slight decreases in "how heard" from all other sources. This is likely due to an improvement of internal coordination and communication within United Way between the 211 system and the Child Development Infoline.
- **Why families call Help Me Grow: Nature of service requests and presenting issues**

When a family or service or health care provider calls the Child Development Infoline number they are asked a series of questions that help the care coordinator assess and link families to an appropriate program. The care coordinators' ongoing training addresses how to interview and build a relationship with callers, ask for appropriate clarification, use active

listening skills, educate callers on how the system works, summarize what has happened during the call, and clarify follow-up program and referral needs.

Families call Help Me Grow for a variety of reasons seeking information or advice. Care coordinators typically record two or more service requests and/ or presenting issues. Together, care coordinators with the family sort out different options and plans for connecting families to support and resources within the community. Child Development Infoline also maintains a plethora of information and materials on child development (e.g., developmental stages, behaviors, milestones) and related parenting strategies. Based on what is discussed and agreed upon with the families, care coordinators often mail informational material to families in addition to connecting families to services and other resources.

The following are reasons why families call Help Me Grow (see also table 3)

- questions related to general development concerns
- seeking an evaluation for child
- concern about child's social or emotional behavior
- concern about child's health or disability
- need for special health services
- education needs, in particular special education services
- basic needs such as medical care, mainly due to financial difficulties
- family issues and functioning (e.g., domestic violence)
- social and recreational programs for their child (camps, playgroups)
- adaptive needs (e.g., related sensory issues)
- mental health condition and/or treatment for child

Table 3: Nature of Service Requests and Presenting Issues*

Nature of Service Requests and Presenting Issues	Fiscal Year 2010		Fiscal Year 2011		Fiscal Year 2012	
	N = 2872		N = 2411		N = 2087	
General Development Issues	1321	46%	892	37%	584	28%
Seeking Evaluations	603	21%	579	24%	563	27%
Behavior/ Social/ Emotional Concerns	115	4%	96	4%	167	8%
Health/ Disability Concerns	431	15%	338	14%	438	21%
Education Concerns	402	14%	458	19%	522	25%
Basic Needs	201	7%	169	7%	167	8%
Social/ Recreation Programs	172	6%	169	7%	167	8%
Family Issues	172	6%	96	4%	125	6%
Adaptive	6	0.2%	5	0.2%	2	0.1%
Mental Health	115	4%	121	5%	104	5%

* Presenting issues are non-exclusive; that is, care coordinators typically record two or more service requests and/ or presenting issues for each family.

Table 3: Summary Analysis

- Questions about general development issues (i.e., child's growth and developmental patterns and related inquiries about support services and programs) have steadily decreased from 46% in FY 2010 to 28% in FY2010. This may be due to the decrease in

number of callers during the past 3 years (see Figure 1 summary analysis, p. 7), which in turn allows the care coordinators to be more precise and thorough in determining families' needs during the intake process. Relative to other issues, care coordinators have documented a steady increase in families calling about:

- Seeking evaluations, steadily increased from 21% in 2010 to 27% in 2012
 - Questions or concerns regarding child's social skills or developmentally appropriate emotional behavior, doubled from 4% in 2010 and 2011 to 8% in 2012
 - Concerns about child's health care and disability needs, increased from 15% and 14% in 2010 and 2011 respectively, to 21% in 2012. This can be related to increased coordination and partnership between program administrators and front line staff at Help Me Grow/Child Development Info Line and Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs.
 - Educational concerns, in particular requests for special education services; steadily increased from 14% in the 2010 fiscal program year to 25% in 2012
- **Triage to early childcare and education program systems and filling the gaps in services: Birth to Three, Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, Early Childhood Special Education Services and Help Me Grow**

Over 55% of the calls for each of the past three years were families seeking general information about the following publicly funded service systems (not shown in table 4): Birth-to-Three (PART C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)); Children and Youth with Special Health Care needs (Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant, Title V of the Social Security Act); and preschool educational services (PART B, IDEA). Child Development Infoline serves as a conduit to these services. In many instances, these families have other presenting issues as well (as shown in Tables 4 and 5). Furthermore, if after initial assessment, family concerns do not meet the criteria for Birth to Three, Early Childhood Special Education services, or Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs, the family becomes part of the Help Me Grow system (see Table 4). Help Me Grow serves as a supportive net to help all families and in particular to help families who otherwise would "fall through the cracks."

Table 4. Division of Program Systems - Fiscal Year 2012

	#	%
Total # of Cases in the HMG Fiscal Year 2012 Database	2087	
Help Me Grow Only Cases	477	23%
Birth to Three Only Cases	360	17%
CYSHCN Only Cases	48	2%
Early Childhood Special Education Only Cases	155	7%
Program Overlap	1047	50%

Table 4: Summary Analysis

- Of the total calls made to Help Me Grow in 2012 (N=2087), 23% were identified as Help Me Grow cases only, 17% were calls referred to Birth to Three, 2% of the calls were directed to Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN), and 7% of

cases were directed to preschool special education services. Half of the callers or 1047 were among cases involved in two or more program systems.

Table 5. Presenting Issues by the Different Program Systems* Fiscal Year 2012

Presenting Issues and Concerns	Birth to Three Only: PART C (N=360)	CYSHCN Only: Title V (N=48)	Early Childhood Special Ed. Only: PART B (N=155)	HMG Only: all other needs (N=477)	HMG with B-3, CYSHCN and/or special needs: overlap of needs (N=891)
Adaptive	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.3%
Basic needs	0%	0%	0%	5%	2%
Behavioral/ social emotional/ mental health	0%	0%	0%	35%	3%
Education	0%	0%	0%	32%	10%
Evaluation	0%	0%	100%	0%	11%
Family issues	0%	0%	0%	17%	2%
Follow-up	2%	0%	0%	0%	40%
Development Issues	0%	0%	0%	45%	90%
General Information	100%	21%	83%	0.4%	66%
Healthy/ disability	0%	0%	0%	20%	5%
Service Need (ie. CYSHCN)	0%	100%	0%	0%	2%
Socialization/ recreation	0%	0%	0%	16%	5%

* 156 families are not included in the table (were referred to 2 or program systems, i.e., CYSHCN with PART B or PART C)

Table 5 Summary analysis:

- 100% of the Birth to Three calls was questions regarding general information. Care coordinators transfer calls for B-3 services and document it as general information. In addition, through an administrative agreement between the United Way, Child Development Infoline and the Birth to 3 Service System, care coordinators make follow up phone calls to families who were referred to Birth to 3 services for an evaluation but their child did not meet criteria. These calls are to inquire if the families are interested or are in need of other support services. The number of families who received a follow up phone call and were in need of further support services, for each year 2010 through 2012 were as follows:

	2010	2011	2012
Families whose child did not meet criteria for B-3 but requested other support services at follow up	316	313	167

- 100% of the calls from families calling about early childhood special education services were inquiries about evaluations. In addition, 83% were calling for general information about special education services.

- Interestingly, we see a range of call types where families do not fit in the program systems and consequently, fall in the supportive Help Me Grow service assisting families with a variety of concerns and requests. 45% of the Help Me Grow cases were of calls regarding development issues. 35% of the calls regard behavioral, emotional, and social questions on behalf of the child, and another 32% are calls regarding educational services. 20% of Help Me Grow calls regard need for children's health or disability, and 17% of calls were about family issues.
- For 891 families receiving publicly-funded services (Title V, PART B, or PART C), families were in need of additional support. 90% of the calls from these families' were about developmental issues with their child, 66% of calls regarded general information, and 40% of calls were follow-up calls in nature. 11% of calls were families who were requesting further evaluation, and another 10% of calls were about education concerns.
- **Number of Calls per Case by Program Systems**

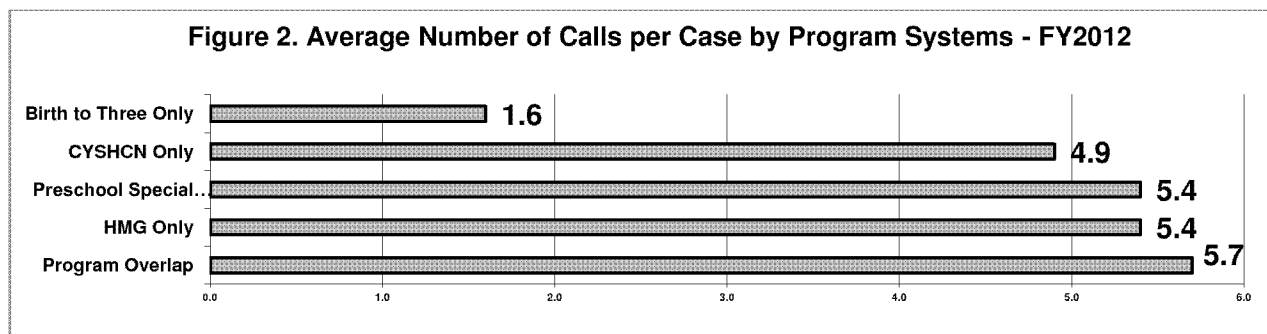


Figure 2: Summary analysis

- Analysis comparing average number of phone contacts per family (incoming and outgoing) between program systems (Fig. 2) showed a significant difference between groups ($F=60.87$, $p<.00$) and the difference was in the expected direction: There is less time and effort (in phone calls) when families meet criteria for publicly funded programs. Specifically, on average care coordinators make 1.6 calls, incoming and outgoing, on behalf of families inquiring about B-3 services as compared with an average of 5.7 calls for families who have unique and/or additional or more complex needs.

Part B. How well is Help Me Grow doing?

- **Number and type of referrals for program services on behalf of families**
Table 6 summarizes the total number of referrals care coordinators made on behalf of families and table 7 shows the top six referrals made on behalf of families (note that this excludes referrals to Birth to Three as families are immediately referred over and care coordinators do not document these referrals).

Table 6. Total Number of Referrals		
FY2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
3,472	3,038	3,225

Table 7: Six Highest Number of Referrals to Service Programs

	Fiscal Year 2010 N= 2077		Fiscal Year 2011 N= 1798		Fiscal Year 2012 N=1677	
Ages & Stages Child Monitoring Program	870	42%	679	38%	456	27%
CYSHCN Services	491	24%	506	28%	613	37%
Education Services	530	26%	490	27%	496	30%
Disability- Related Programs	397	19%	329	18%	434	26%
211 (Basic Needs)	182	9%	128	7%	130	8%
Parenting Education	184	9%	111	6%	142	8%

Table 7 Summary analysis:

- The total number of Help Me Grow referrals to service programs for Connecticut families during the 2011-2012 program year was 3,225, a 6% increase from the previous year but a 7% decrease from Fiscal Year 2010. Given that the number of callers decreased the past 3 years, the increase in the number of referrals can be explained by (1) an increase in the number of service requests or presenting issues (see table 3), and (2) improved “resourcing” by the care coordinators, many of whom have been employed in their position for at least 3 years.
- Table 7 shows the top 6 referral services in the past three years. While there has been a decrease in the number of referrals to Ages & Stages Child Monitoring Program, referrals for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN), educational-related services, and referrals to disability-related programs have steadily increased in the past 3 years. Referrals to 211 Infoline (e.g., for basic needs such as Husky Health Insurance) and parenting education have remained consistent in the previous 3 program years.

• Tracking Barriers to and Gaps in Services

Care coordinators typically help families when they are confronted with gaps or barriers to services (for example, if no one speaks the same language as the family). Care coordinators are eventually able to connect families to services (as already noted in Figure 3, 81% of service needs were addressed for the 2012 program fiscal year); this is because care coordinators either (1) persistently follow through with an agency; (2) move their efforts to other agencies and programs that provide similar services, or; (3) modify their efforts and find the best possible program. Program staff, under guidance from Help Me Grow’s Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team and using feedback from evaluation of Help Me Grow, have begun a process for identifying and tracking gaps and barriers to connecting families to services. Although the data as yet are incomplete, examination of documented gaps and barriers show similar patterns from year to year. Table 8 shows the top five barriers and gaps in services for each of the past 3 years.

Table 8. Services: Barriers and Gaps

Fiscal Year 2010 N= 2872	Fiscal Year 2011 N= 2411	Fiscal Year 2012 N= 2087
Long waiting list	Long waiting list	Long waiting list

Does not meet criteria	Agency has not returned call in timely manner	Agency has not returned call in timely manner
Intake application too difficult	Can't afford service	Does not meet criteria
Agency has not returned call in timely manner	Language barrier	Language barrier
Can't afford service	Does not meet criteria	Over income

Table 8 Summary analysis:

- Data on barriers and gaps in services were examined to determine patterns. Although there are many types of gaps and barriers that are documented by care coordinators, four or five are consistently the most documented from year to year: Long waiting list is at the top of the list each year, most of which is for respite care. Not receiving a returned call from the service agency in a timely manner is one of the top five barriers to services each year as is not meeting criteria or program requirements. Also reported is language barrier between family and agency, family difficulty with intake application, service affordability (can't afford service), and in the past year, over income for receiving service.

PART C. Is anyone better off as a result of utilizing Help Me Grow?

- Rates of successful or positive outcomes:** Outcomes of family referrals for service and information requests (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Help Me Grow Outcomes

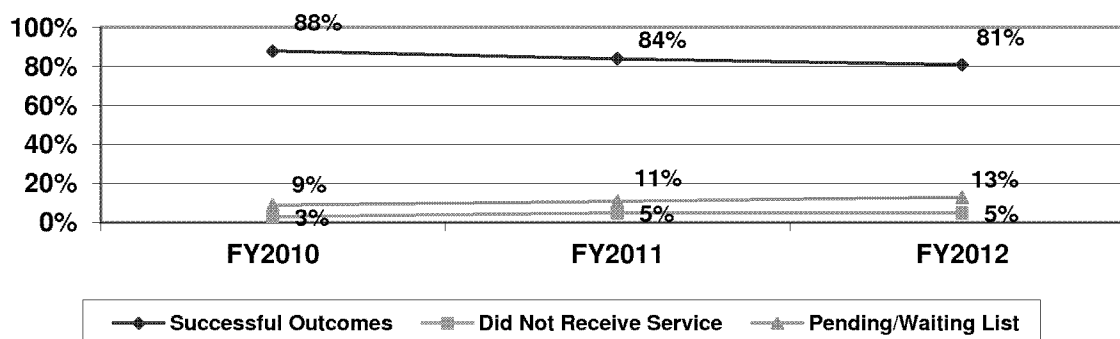


Figure 3 Summary analysis

- Outcomes of family referrals for service and information request have over an 80% success rate showing that families are successfully connected to services four out of five times.
- The decrease in successful outcomes (from 88% in FY2010 to 81% in FY2012) is balanced by the increase in outcomes that are recorded as pending (from 9% in FY2010 to 13% in FY2012). This may be due to capacity issues of agencies.
- The percentage of services referrals where families were not connected has increased from 3% in 2010 to 5% in 2011 and 2012.

- **Pending Outcomes:** The majority of pending outcomes are among services where parents are typically placed on a waiting list.

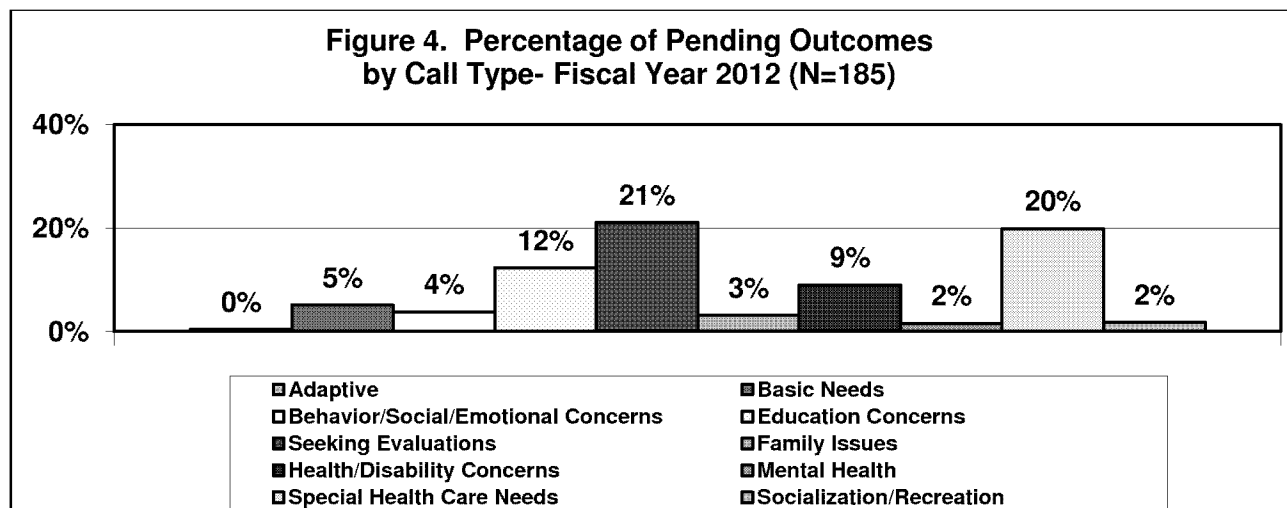


Figure 4 Summary analysis:

- Out of the 185 families with pending outcomes to services, 21% were families seeking evaluations for their child, 20% were services requested for children with special health care needs. Generally, this group is specific to requesting respite care.
- 12% of families with pending outcomes to services were related to educational concerns and another 9% of these families were of families requesting services for health or disability concerns.

Section II. “The Five Connecticuts”

Analysis of data by the “Five Connecticuts.” Similar to previous annual reports, we examined “caller” data further to determine if there were meaningful patterns between different socioeconomic town groups relative to: where Help Me Grow families reside (see Figures 5 and 6), reasons for calling Help Me Grow (see Figures 7 and 8), and rates of phone contacts (see Figure 9). In order to do this we used an analysis conducted by the Center for Population Research, University of Connecticut (2004) that categorized individual towns into five “distinct, enduring, and separate groups” in terms of income, poverty and population density (<http://popcenter.uconn.edu>).

- **Where the families live: Urban Core, Urban Periphery Suburban, Rural, Wealthy**

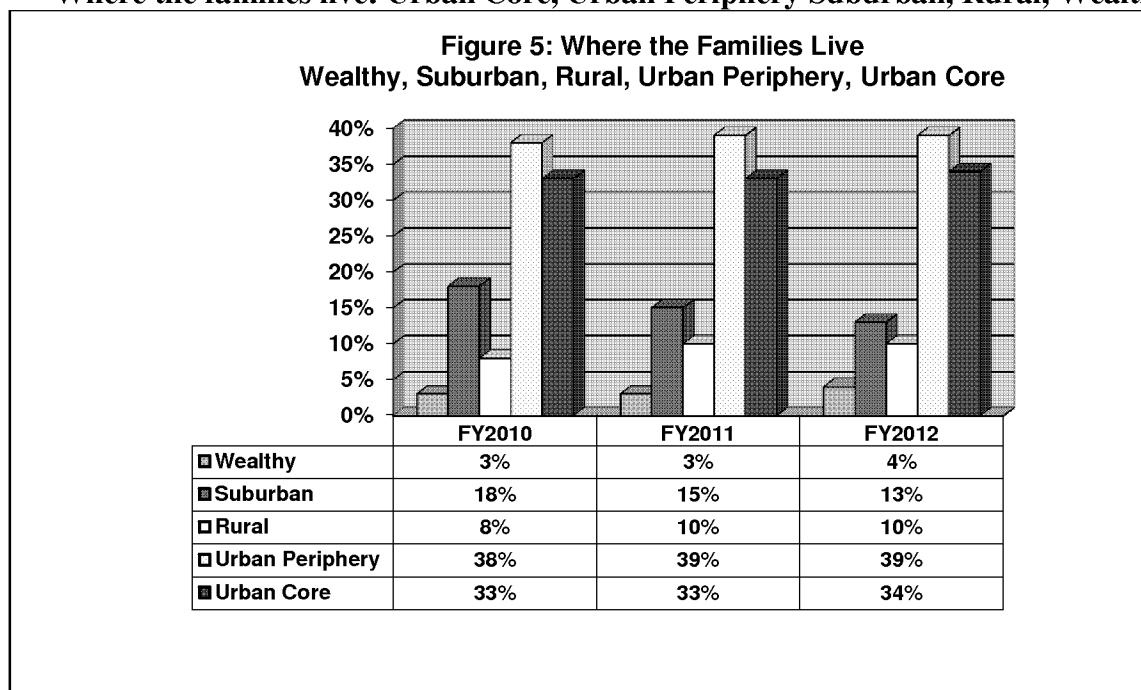


Figure 5: Summary analysis

- As below figure 5 shows, the percentages of where Help Me Grow callers reside within the different town groups are similar across the past three years.
- The majority of families who contacted Help Me Grow in Fiscal Year 2012 resided in the Urban Periphery (39%) and the Urban Core (34%) of Connecticut. Altogether, these towns have the lowest income, the highest poverty rates, and the highest population density. The Urban Periphery (36% of the state's population) consists of 30 "transitional" towns (i.e., located between the urban cores and the suburbs) with below average income, average poverty rates, and a high population density. The town of Manchester is representative of this group. The Urban Core (19% of the state's population) consists of the 6 Connecticut cities that have the lowest income, the highest poverty rates, and the highest population density. Hartford and Bridgeport are both representative of this group.
- The third largest group of callers in FY 2012 resided in Suburban CT (13%), consisting of 61 towns and 26% of the state's population, with above average income, low poverty rates, and moderate population density. The town of Cheshire is representative of this group.
- A relatively smaller percentage of callers (10%) reside in Rural CT, consisting of 63 towns and 13% of the state's population, with average income, below average poverty rates, and the lowest population density. North Stonington is representative of this group (Levy, Don, Rodriguez, & Villemez 2004).

The fewest number of callers reside in Wealthy CT (4%) consisting of 8 towns and 5% of the state's population, and has exceptionally high income, low poverty, and moderate population density. The town of Westport is representative of this group.

- **Where the families reside: Help Me Grow compared with the state population.**

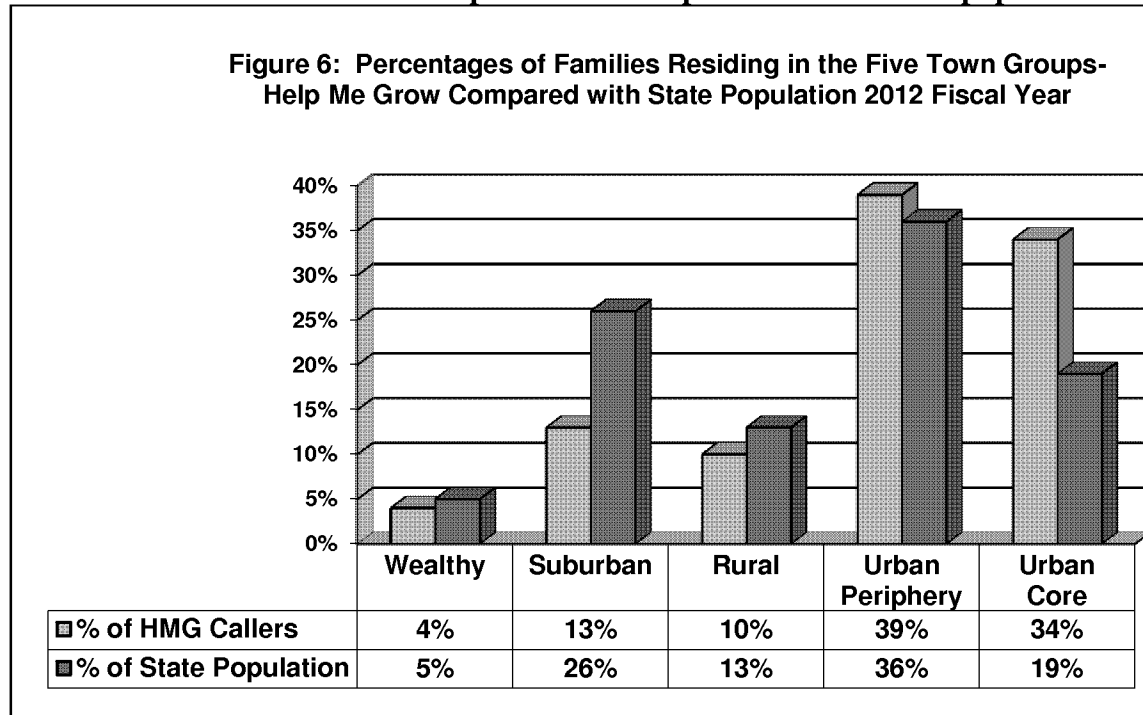


Figure6: Summary analysis

- Figure 6 shows that the percentages of Help Me Grow families that reside in the Wealthy (4%), Rural (10%), and Urban Periphery (39%) town groups are proportionate to the percentages of these town groups' overall population in the state (i.e., 5%, 13%, and 36%, respectively).
- The percentage of Help Me Grow families that reside in Suburban CT (13%) is disproportionately lower than the percentage of this group's overall population in the state (26%). Furthermore, the percentage of callers from Urban Core CT (34%) is disproportionately higher than the percentage of this group's overall population in the state (19%).

Figures 7 and 8, together, make up the majority of service requests and presenting issues by the different town groups. In order to better understand family needs and services in the different communities, we compared issues that represented intervention (Figure 7) and those that represented prevention (Figure 8) between the five town groups.

Figure 7: Why People Call Help Me Grow: Intervention

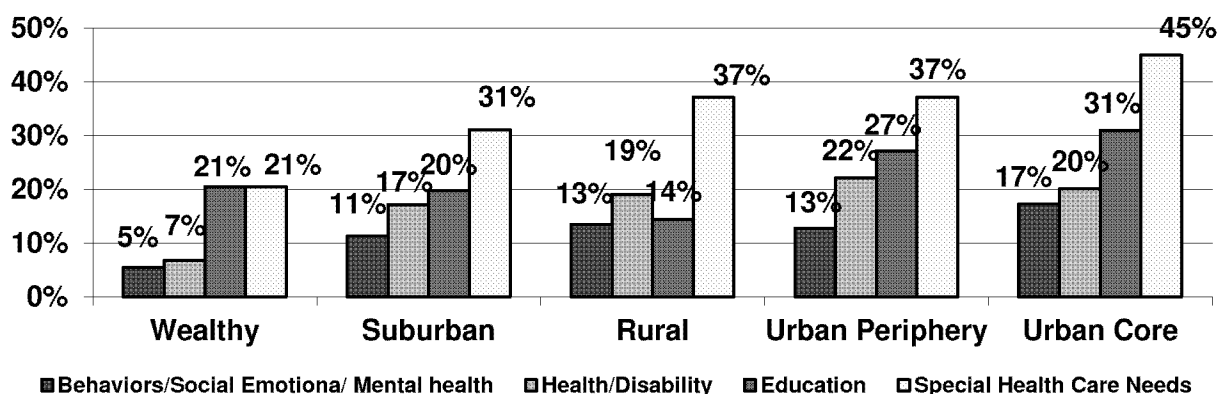
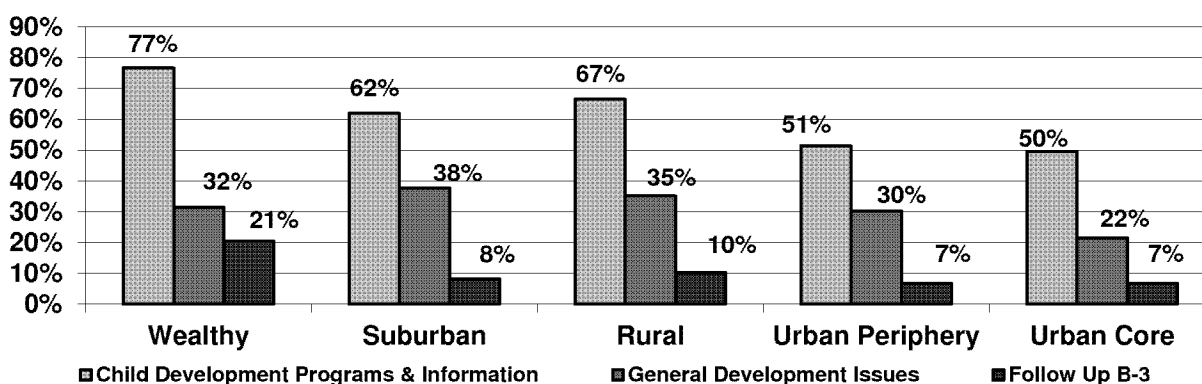


Figure 8: Why People Call Help Me Grow: Prevention



Figures 7 & 8: Summary analysis

- The data in Figure 7 are calls made to Help Me Grow that represent intervention efforts: inquiries about social/behavioral concerns, educational concerns, and special health care and disability-related needs. Overall there is a comparatively lower percentage of calls that represent intervention efforts for families that reside in wealthy communities and a higher percentage of calls that represent intervention efforts for families that reside in poorer communities.
- The data in Figure 8 are calls made to Help Me Grow that could be considered preventive in nature: families who are calling to inquire about publicly funded child development programs and general development issues (i.e., child's growth and developmental patterns and related inquiries about support services and programs), as well as families who continue to seek support when they learned their child was not eligible for Birth to Three services (e.g., developmental monitoring through ASQ program). Overall there is a higher percentage of calls related to prevention from families that reside in the suburban communities and a lower percentage of calls related to prevention from families that reside in poorer communities.

- **Number of Calls per Case by Town Groups**

**Figure 9: Average Number of Calls per Family between Town Groups
Fiscal Year 2012 N=1951**

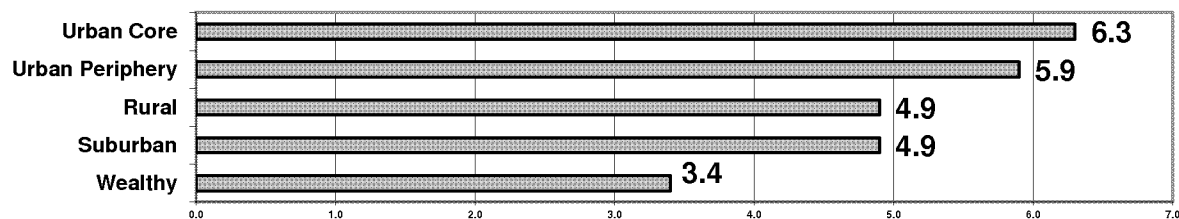


Figure 9: Summary analysis

- Analysis comparing average number of phone contacts per family (incoming and outgoing) between the 5 town groups (Fig. 9) showed a significant difference ($F=6.34$, $p<.00$). The greatest average number of phone contacts per family occurs in the poorer communities, specifically, the Urban Core and the Urban Periphery, and the lowest number of calls per family (on average) occurs in Wealthy CT. For populations living in poorer communities where there is the most complex need (e.g., families with less resources and with more calls about intervention, see figure 7), care coordination requires more time and contact in comparison with more affluent communities (where families have more personal resources and calls are relatively more preventative in nature, see figure 8).

- **Comparison of the referrals among the Five Connecticut town groups**

**Figure 10 Four Highest Referrals:
Comparison between Town Groups- Fiscal Year 2012**

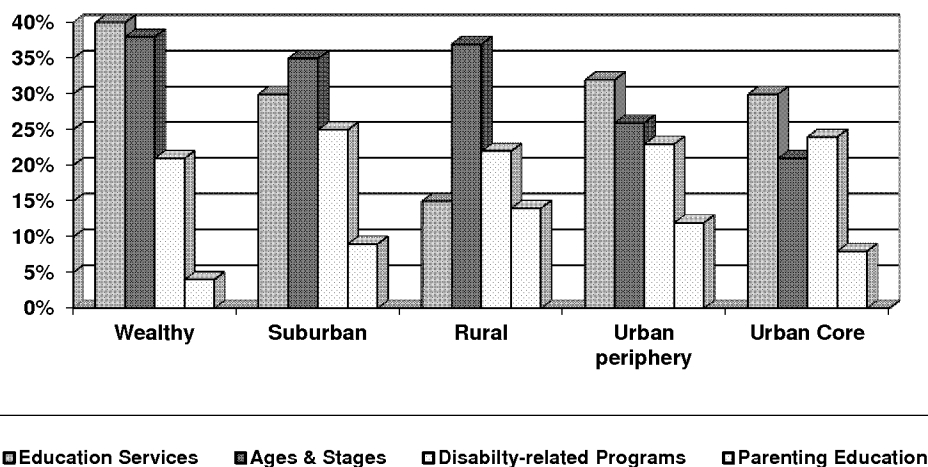


Figure 10 Summary Analysis:

- Within Wealthy CT, the highest rates of referrals made on behalf of families was for education services and the Ages & Stages Child Monitoring (ASQ) program, followed by disability-related services, and a small percentage of referrals made to parenting education programs. Referrals made on behalf of families in Suburban CT were similarly proportionate except that rates of referrals for education services and the ASQ program were slightly less while referrals for disability-related services and parenting education programs were slightly more.
- Compared to other town groups, there was a relatively higher rate of referrals for the ASQ program and much lower rate for education services in Rural CT.
- As compared to other town groups there was a relatively higher rate of referrals to parenting education programs in Rural and Urban Periphery town groups.
- As compared with other town groups, relative rates of referrals to the ASQ program were lowest in Urban Core CT.
- **Comparison of Outcomes between the “Five Connecticut” during Fiscal Year 2012**

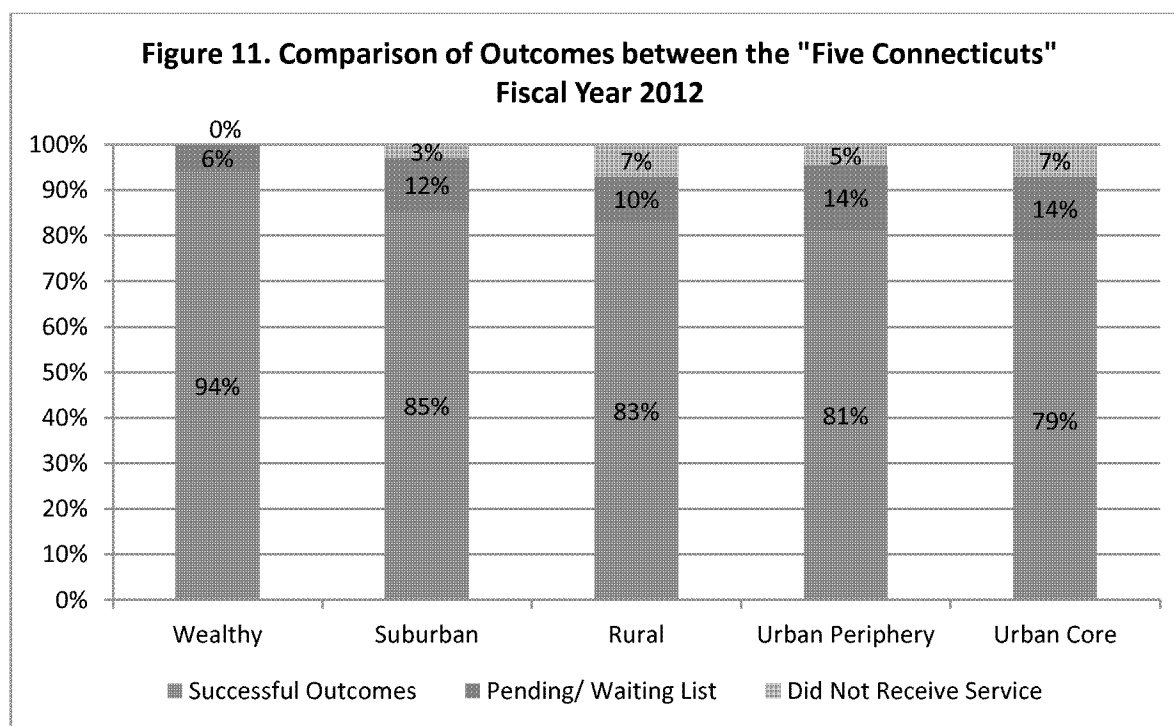


Figure 11 Summary Analysis:

- Rates of successful outcomes between the 5 town groups ranged from 79% in Urban Core Connecticut to 94% in Wealthy Connecticut.
- The percentage of pending outcomes is lowest in Wealthy CT as compared with all other town groups that range from 10 to 14%.
- The percentage of referrals on behalf of families where families did not receive a service is highest in the rural, urban periphery and urban core town groups, at 7%, 5% and 7%

respectively, and lowest in suburban CT at 3% and wealthy CT which had 0% families who did not receive a requested service.

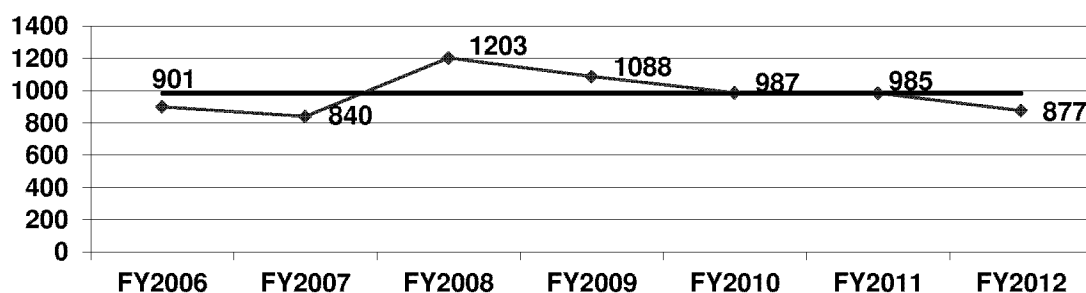
SECTION III. *Help Me Grow's* Ages & Stages Child Monitoring Program

- **Utilization of the Ages & Stages Child Monitoring Program:** A total of 3,186 children were participating in the ASQ program at the end of the 2011-2012 program year. Table 9 shows the number of participating families at the end of each of the past three years, and Figure 12 shows the number of families that entered the program for each year since the 2006 fiscal program year.

Table 9. Total Number of Children Who were Sent Ages and Stages Questionnaires per Year

FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
3,210	3,325	3,186

**Figure 12. Active Ages & Stages Monitoring:
Number of families entering each year**



Summary analysis

- The number of families entering the Ages and Stages Child Monitoring Program has remained relatively constant, averaging 984 new enrolled families. In Fiscal Year 2008, an increase of the number of families entering ASQ monitoring occurred due to an increase in outreach and training to pediatricians.
- The decrease in the number of families enrolling in the ASQ Child Monitoring since 2008 may be attributed to the challenging state budget situation which has impacted outreach efforts (i.e. promoting the program to health care providers and day care providers) as already noted in Section I of this report.

SECTION V.

Recommendations

- 1) In light of efforts to increase public awareness of Help Me Grow and the steady increase in identifying presenting issues and corresponding referrals on behalf of families, it is recommended that all collaborating partners (i.e., the Department of Social Services, Children's Trust Fund, the Child Development Infoline at the United Way of Connecticut/211, the Connecticut Department of Birth to Three System, the State Department of Education Preschool Special Education Department, and the Department of Public Health's Children and Youth with Special Health Care needs program) assess program capacity as a team for better understanding and proactive planning relative to outreach, staffing and training. Systematic assessment of capacity is critical for balancing increase in calls with quality of service.
- 2) Continue outreach and efforts to raise awareness on developmental surveillance and on Ages & Stages monitoring program in particular. As much as possible, identify and track where training has occurred, who is utilizing the program, and where training is most needed.
- 3) The data on families and children collected through Help Me Grow efforts are singular in that they provide an opportunity to compare trends in family and child needs and services across the state. In order to inform promotional and outreach efforts (as outlined above), it is recommended that data analyses focus on variation in match between family needs and services, gaps and barriers, and outcomes in different parts of the state.
- 4) Help Me Grow network meetings- meetings held bimonthly in each of 7 major cities located in every region of the state, provide a unique forum for bringing together front-line and supervisory staff (on a volunteer basis) from a range of community-based programs and as such, have great potential for developing capacity to integrate early childhood services. Consider collecting quantitative data on these network meetings will to examine penetration of training and outreach to pediatricians, child care providers, and community-based service providers by examining trends in calls in relation to outreach and promotional efforts.

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- (1) The W.K. Kellogg Foundation awarded the Connecticut Children's Medical Center a grant in 2010 to replicate the state of Connecticut Help Me Grow system in 10 states.
- (2) Joslyn, Allison, Hughes, Help Me Grow: 2010- 2012 Evaluation Report, Center for Social Research, University of Hartford, Connecticut, 2012, p. v.
- (3) EPIC is a training initiative for pediatricians sponsored by the Connecticut Health and Development institute in partnership with the CT Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CT Chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians. Training modules include screening and development surveillance, Help Me Grow and a number of health related topics.
- (4) The State of Connecticut was awarded an Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative (SECCS) grant launched by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) of the U.S. Department of Human Services in 2013.
- (5) Brookes Publishing Co., Baltimore, Maryland, www.brookespublishing.com
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- (9) Form CMS-416, Annual EPSTD Participation Report. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, 2011.
- (10) Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE), Mathematica Policy Research, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), 2009.

**The Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce
Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for Teachers**

**Submitted by:
Peg Oliveira, Deborah Adams, Colleen Brower
On Behalf of the Early Childhood Workforce Workgroup**

I. Introduction

Acknowledgements

Process and Purpose

Alignment with Related Standards

Guiding Principles and Core Beliefs

Background and Process

Defining Core Knowledge Areas

Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Guide and Assess Skills and Knowledge

Summary

II. Core Knowledge and Competencies

Introduction

Every moment an adult interacts with and cares for a young child is a moment rich with the potential for learning. An effective early childhood teacher must be knowledgeable about child development, able to engage in respectful reciprocal relationships with children, families and the community, and adept in the use of strategies and tools to promote positive development. Early childhood teachers must have a firm understanding of relationship-based practices, personal knowledge of child development and all academic areas, in order to effectively support every child's growth in all domains, including children with special needs. In addition, early childhood teachers should be skillful at observing and assessing learning and intentional in planning experiences and environments that support every child's growth.

In order to effectively encourage children's social and emotional development for example, a teacher must possess an understanding of theories of social and emotional development, exhibit particular dispositions such as empathy and caring, and be able to implement specific strategies and practices (i.e., those associated with helping children cope with separation, becoming self-regulated).

Research shows that the development of early childhood teachers with these competencies brings great rewards for children. High-quality early childhood care and education produces substantial long-term educational, social, and economic benefits. The largest benefits for children occur when early childhood teachers are professionally prepared and adequately compensated.

This document offers a blueprint of the core competencies early childhood teachers should possess in order to take advantage of this formative period in a child's life. These core competencies are meant to cross a variety of sectors where teachers interact with children ages birth to five, such as, public schools, family child care homes, and all of licensed early care settings.

Acknowledgements

This work is a product of thoughtful collaboration between individuals that represent multiple agencies as well as sectors/settings in which children receive early care and education. The time dedicated to the brainstorming, review, and constant editing by groups of volunteers speaks volumes to the passion and commitment people have for improving the early childhood workforce. The Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce Workgroup and the Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Core Knowledge and Competency Leadership Team extends endless gratitude to the workgroups and reviewers for their time and expertise in developing this draft and for their continued interest in completing this work. A special thanks to EASTCONN for providing the office support and graphic design elements. Please see Appendix A for a listing of workgroup members.

Rationale and Purpose

As research has revealed more about the rapid growth and development of young children and how they learn best, it has also underscored the importance of early learning for later school success¹. Similarly, research on the temperament and skills understood to be predictive of an effective early childhood teacher has also expanded Connecticut's efforts to build a high quality early care and education system. Leveraging this research while building a system to help ensure that every child is cared for by a highly qualified workforce with access to a high quality professional development system will benefit our youngest learners.

At the foundation of this system is the knowledge base of theory and research that underlies practice. This is referred to as **Core Knowledge and Competencies** and is defined as:

Core Knowledge and Competencies for teachers define what early care educators need to know (content) and be able to do (skills) while working with and/or on behalf of children and their families.

Core Knowledge and Competencies provide all who work within Connecticut's early care and education sectors a common set of standards upon which training, technical assistance, and post-secondary coursework can be designed and aligned.

The specific goals of this Core Knowledge and Competencies document are to:

- Provide coherent structure and content to inform the daily practice of professionals who work directly with young children and their families;
- Promote self-reflection and intentional professional development;
- Guide program administrators and directors in assessing staff, identifying areas for professional development, and creating/reviewing job descriptions;
- Aid professional development organizations in designing professional learning opportunities that will fulfill competency needs;
- Assist teacher education programs in designing course content that will fulfill competency needs, as well as facilitate transfer and articulation agreements; and
- Support public and private investments, incentives, and initiatives that encourage and facilitate professional competency.

¹ Better Teachers, Better Preschools: Student Achievement Linked to Teacher Qualifications Issue 2 / Revised December 2004, W. Steven Barnett, National Institute for Early Education Research.

Connecticut chose to first identify core knowledge and competencies for the role of teacher across various settings/sectors. The teacher role was chosen because it has the most immediate impact on children when they are outside their home. The teacher role was also chosen to align the multiple credentials and certifications associated with this role by offering a unifying framework.

The working definition of “early childhood teacher” developed for this purpose is:

Parents are their children’s first and most influential caregivers and teachers. During the course of their early years, however, most children in Connecticut will also have their development and experiences shaped by at least one early childhood professional – someone dedicated to the care, education and well-being of young children, birth to age eight, and their families.

The Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework is intended for early childhood teachers across all settings (schools, community, child center classrooms and home-based care) who work with children, singularly or in groups, birth through age 5 and their families. The CT Core Knowledge and Competencies articulate the essential skills and knowledge that teachers who work with young children and their families need to know, understand, and be able to do to promote and assess young children’s healthy development and learning. Through the work of expert advisers, and with input from early childhood education professionals and stakeholders, the resulting competencies offer a road map for building meaningful relationships with children, families and colleagues, for creating nurturing, stimulating environments, and for developing oneself as a professional in this incredibly important field.

Alignment with Related Standards

In the process of defining Connecticut’s Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework, developers began with the expectations and definitions of a comprehensive early childhood workforce as set forth in the federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant application.² This definition states that a core knowledge and competency framework, at a minimum:

- (a) Is evidence-based;
- (b) Incorporates knowledge and application of the State’s Early Learning and Development Standards, the Comprehensive Assessment Systems, child development, health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with all children and families;

² Core knowledge and competencies (CKCs) refers to the expectations for what the workforce should know (content) and be able to do (skills) in their role working with and/or on behalf of children and their families. These CKCs provide a foundation for professional development design (including instructional practices) and other quality improvement efforts. Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems. NAEYC 2009.

- (c) Includes knowledge of early mathematics and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and literacy development in young children;
- (d) Incorporates effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement;
- (e) Includes effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social and emotional development while reducing challenging behaviors;
- (f) Incorporates feedback from experts at the State's postsecondary institutions and other early learning and development experts and early childhood Teachers; and
- (g) Includes knowledge of protective factors and effective approaches to partnering with families and building families' knowledge, skills, and capacity to promote children's health and development.

The developers of Connecticut's Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework sought symmetry with the core knowledge and competency reports produced in our neighboring states of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. This effort was made in order to achieve a set of Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Teachers that are in accord with the region, ultimately leading to the possibility of the portability of credentials between New England states for the early childhood workforce. This regional alignment encourages opportunity for a highly qualified workforce in the New England region.

The alignment process focused first on the consistency of the competencies with the Federal definition, NAEYC standards and other important resources; and with neighboring states (Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont). Additionally, developers incorporated changes in the field such as new trends, research, regulations, and ongoing development of other states' initiatives.

Based on this research, the Connecticut Core Knowledge Domains chosen for inclusion are:

- Building Meaningful Curriculum
- Using Developmentally Effective Approaches for Teaching and Learning
- Promoting Child Development and Learning
- Observing, Documenting and Assessing
- Building Family and Community Relationships
- Health, Safety and Wellness
- Professionalism and Advocacy

An additional priority was to address competency elements that are needed to elevate Connecticut's prominence within the federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) criteria. As such, an effort was made to weave the following elements throughout the core knowledge areas as foundational to the fabric of high quality practice:

- Special Education
- Cultural Competence
- Dual Language Learners

Guiding Principles and Core Beliefs

The following Core Beliefs, drawn from work on Core Knowledge and Competency Framework development in California, served as the foundation for the development of this framework, and form the heart of all seven of the competency domains:

- Children are born ready to learn.
- The family is where children attain their first experiences in life and is the most prominent and continuing influence in a child's life.
- All children and their families, regardless of their racial-ethnic origins, value systems, faiths, customs, languages, and compositions, must be equally respected.
- Families and children have the right to access support systems that foster their growth and development.
- Every human being is a unique individual, with diverse modes of learning and expression as well as experiences, interests and strengths.
- Children are worthy of the same respect as adults.
- Children's needs for shelter and for physical, intellectual, emotional, and social nourishment must be met for them to grow, develop, and learn to their fullest potential.
- Children are social beings who need to be engaged in meaningful relationships.
- Children have the right to secure, trusting relationships with adults and to safe, nurturing environments.
- Children learn through play, both simple and complex. Teaching and learning are dynamic, integrated, and reciprocal processes.
- Children learn through self-directed play as well as meaningful, intentionally planned experiences, in a typical sequence of awareness, exploration, inquiry and application.
- Social and emotional learning is key to every child's ability to self-regulate, to identify their own feelings and to interact successfully with others.
- Children construct knowledge based on their curiosity and driven by their interests as well as through interactions with adults and other children facilitating this construction.
- Children learn best when exposed to and engaged in high-quality environments, interactions, and relationships.

- Children learn best when the adults in their life work in partnership with one another.

In defining the Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Teachers, Connecticut will incorporate the following Guiding Principles:

- Build a **meaningful curriculum** to advance all areas of each child's development, including social, emotional, intellectual, and physical competence;
- Use developmentally appropriate techniques to **teach effectively**;
- Support **child development and learning** by understanding that children develop at individual rates, yet in a predictable sequence, and applying this knowledge in practice;
- Systematically **observe, document and assess** children's behavior, to inform planning for individual experiences and build meaningful curriculum, as well as to recognize and meet individual needs;
- Build productive and reciprocal **partnerships with children and their families and communities**, recognizing that children are best understood in the context of family, culture, and society;
- Maintain a **safe and healthy environment** for children;
- Make a commitment to **professionalism** by continuing to develop skills and work collaboratively to improve the quality of early care and education services.
- Include the array of experience brought by diversity of **culture, dual language learners and children with special needs**.

Background and Process

Phase 1: Reviewing existing competencies in Connecticut

In 2011, the federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant application set forth expectations and definitions for states to build the foundations for a comprehensive early childhood workforce. Connecticut established an early childhood stakeholder workgroup to examine the State's current workforce status and documents that guide Connecticut's workforce development. The stakeholder workgroup found that Connecticut has:

- Multiple sets of competencies³ associated with the teacher role and multiple certifications and/or credentials but no unifying framework that describes the expectations associated with the role of the teacher across sectors/settings.
- Some competencies associated with some but not all early childhood teacher roles and no single framework that describes the expectations associated with each early childhood role.

³ Competency sets included SDE Teacher Certification PK-3 or B-K, SDE Teacher Certification Special Education PK-12, Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC), Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, Training Program in Child Development (TPCD)/CCAC Core Areas of Knowledge, Infant/Toddler Credential (for Birth to 3 system) and Infant/Toddler Certificate (offered by Charter Oak State College)

These findings set the charge for the first phase of work, undertaken by a stakeholder group of 40 individuals, representing a variety of sectors, to further examine the multiple sets of competencies associated with the teacher role. This process set a baseline for the next phase; developing a Core Knowledge and Competencies framework for the teacher role and eventually all other early care and education roles.

Phase 2: Defining *Connecticut's Core Knowledge and Competency Framework*

In February, 2013, experts from across the state representing Connecticut's early care and education system (child care centers, family child care providers, state-funded programs, Head Start, higher education institutions, coaches and consultants) were invited to participate in a daylong forum on the defining the process for determining Connecticut's Core Knowledge and Competencies.

Drawing from their own experiences, national experts as well as representatives from New England states offered their expertise, consultation and perspectives on the development of an Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework in their states. Feedback from the forum was used to prepare Connecticut's draft set of core knowledge and competencies.

Interested forum participants were invited to join in an ongoing stakeholder work group dedicated to development of Connecticut's Core Knowledge and Competencies. Thirty stakeholders from the forum volunteered to participate in the design of a Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency framework and to create accompanying documents. An independent consultant, a consultant from the State Department of Education (who recently transitioned to the new Office of Early Childhood in July 2013) and a consultant from Connecticut Charts-A-Course (who recently transitioned to the new Office of Early Childhood in July 2013), comprised the leadership team and facilitated the stakeholder work group meetings as well as an online process of editing preliminary drafts of Connecticut's Core Knowledge and Competencies.

Three daylong working group sessions were held that allowed input from the intended audience for the competencies; teachers and those who are responsible for their professional development.

The first working group session held in April 2013 centered on the definition of each domain by which competencies would be constructed. Participants agreed on a set of Core Beliefs and Guiding Principles to frame their work, and began by making several significant design decisions including:

- To include indicators, as well as domains of Core Knowledge and Competencies
- To align the knowledge and competencies by level with an adapted version of Bloom's Taxonomy.

The stakeholder work group then defined domains of Core Knowledge and Competencies for inclusion. These domains are:

- Building Meaningful Curriculum

- Using Developmentally Effective Approaches for Teaching and Learning
- Promoting Child Development and Learning
- Observing, Documenting and Assessing
- Building Family and Community Relationships
- Health, Safety and Wellness
- Professionalism and Advocacy

Additionally, the following strands of knowledge were identified as elements that needed elevated prominence within the federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) criteria. These strands are:

- Special Education
- Cultural Competence
- Dual Language Learners

Domains were edited and solidified through an online feedback process. Following this process, a second working group session, held in May 2013, centered on the definition of indicators within these competency domains. At this meeting participants were asked to consider and define indicators by level within the defined domains.

After the draft competencies were revised based on feedback from the second stakeholder working group meeting and online edits the consultant posted an updated draft to the online editing format. Subsequent weekly online “homework” assignments allowed members to comment on developing drafts of this report. All feedback was analyzed and considered for inclusion in the final draft.

To expand the perspective, a draft was sent to groups of individuals who did not participate in the workgroups but work within one or more of the sectors/settings in which this document is intended. Feedback was incorporated and a third working group session, held in July 2013, focused on sorting out redundancy and confirming the placement of items.

A final sorting by the leadership team along with results from the stakeholder workgroup meetings and online edits, as well as previous research on the development of CKC’s in other states, was synthesized and produced this penultimate draft of a Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Core Competency Areas

Connecticut’s Draft Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competencies are organized into seven domains deemed important to the profession. Additionally, reflected in all domains is the respect for the need, across all domains, for knowledge and understanding of cultural competency, dual language learning and special education as related to each domain.

Also important, the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) that outline the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that children ages birth to age five should know and be able to do, were woven throughout the domains as a foundational framework to guide practice

and assessment. See Appendix B for a description of each domain.

Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Guide and Assess Skills and Knowledge

Inherent in each of the seven competency areas is the assumption that adults can exemplify their knowledge, understanding and skill across a continuum of higher order thinking; from beginner to advanced. Bloom's Taxonomy-Revised provides the frame that supports the continuum of thinking skills that early childhood educators should possess as well as be able to promote with young children.

Bloom's Taxonomy is a multi-tiered model of classifying learning according to six cognitive levels of complexity, or thinking structures. The lowest three levels are: knowledge, comprehension, and application. The highest three levels are: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Each level scaffolds and builds upon the prior.

With the Bloom's Taxonomy-Revised framework as an organizing device, the knowledge and competencies become more complex. The six levels of Bloom's were re-structured by the leadership team into four levels for the purpose of simplicity and to align with existing core knowledge and competency frameworks in neighboring states. The core competency levels are also cumulative. In other words, (1) concepts at Level 1 will advance in difficulty through the subsequent levels; and (2) someone working at a Level III in any given competency area should have the knowledge and competencies identified for Levels I and II in that area. See Appendix C for a description of the re-structured Bloom's Taxonomy.

Summary

This DRAFT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework document (see Appendix D) completes the work outlined in the Workforce Workgroup strategic goal. The work will continue through the Office of Early Childhood in collaboration with the cross-sector workgroups. The following work will continue.

- A cross-walk between documents from neighboring states, Connecticut credentials and certifications, and national standards to identify alignment across states and national work.
- Coding the interwoven strands (Special Education, Cultural Competence, and Dual Language Learners)
- Referencing seminal work.
- A glossary of terms
- Final editing and vetting of the Connecticut document
- Begin development of Core Knowledge and Competency Frameworks for early childhood roles such as Directors, Coaches, Consultants, Specialists, Home Visitors, Higher Education Faculty, Professional Development Designers/Trainers, etc.
- Begin constructing competency-based professional development plan frameworks and evaluation tools.

Our culminating efforts will result in foundational documents outlining the competencies for multiple early childhood roles by which training and technical assistance will be based to better

serve individuals working in those roles. Professional development plans and evaluative measures will assist individuals to grow in their role and explore additional role options as they progress in competency development. To reiterate, ‘research shows that the development of early childhood teachers with these competencies brings great rewards for children’. Connecticut is well on its way to codifying these competencies in alignment with other states to promote regional sharing of expertise and portability of credentials thanks in a large part to the leadership of the Workforce Workgroup and the funding provided by the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet.

APPENDIX A:

CONNECTICUT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES WORKGROUP

This draft edition of **Connecticut's Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competencies Workgroup** is the result of thoughtful collaboration among many early childhood professionals. We thank the following early childhood professionals, representing various sectors, who provided their insight, expertise, tireless assistance and guidance during the writing and review process of **Connecticut's Early Childhood Workforce Core Knowledge and Competencies Workgroup**.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	AGENCY	SECTOR REPRESENTING
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Casey	Sheila	West Haven Community House	Teachers, Head Start
Castle	Sara	Boys and Girls Club & Family Center of Bristol, Imagine Nation Preschool learning Center	Teachers, School Readiness
Daley	Susan	Willow House Preschool and Early Learning Center	Directors, Center-based
Gill	Renee	CT Family Day Care Association Network (CFDCAN)	Entities, CFDCAN
Helmerich	Lee	Bridgeport School Readiness	Community Networks, School Readiness Councils
Kennen	Kristen	Education Connection	Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP)
Langer	Pam	CT Parents As Teachers (PAT)	Parents as Teachers Org
Liberto	Nancy	Early Childhood Teacher Credential	Higher Ed Faculty, 4 year colleges
Mansfield	Kimberly	Goodwin College	Higher Ed Faculty, 2 and 4 year colleges
Meiner	Beryl	Branford Early Learning Center	Directors, Center-based
Memmott	Cheryl	West Haven Community House	Teachers, Head Start
Morgan	David	CT Head Start Association & TEAM, Inc.	Directors, Head Start

O'Brien	Catherine	CT Association for Infant Mental Health (CT-AIMH)	Infant/Toddler Mental Health
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Peloso-Ulreich	Tina	Bridgeport Public Schools	Directors, Public Schools
Rader	Ana	All Our Kin, Inc.	Family Child Care
Resnick	Deb	Birth to Three	State Agencies, Department of Developmental Disabilities
Sevell-Nelson	Amy	Educational Consultant	Education Consultants and Coaches
Stabler	Jo-Ann	Charter Oak State College	Higher Ed Faculty, 4 year colleges
Tacchi	Barbara	Waterbury School Readiness	Community Networks, School Readiness
Tenorio, Ed.D	Sue	Early Childhood Special Education	Community Networks, Discovery
Thergood	Naima	St. Mark's Day Care Center, Inc.	Teachers, Child Day Care
Velazquez	Marissa	DC Moore School	Site Coordinators
Watson	Debbie	Post University	Higher Ed Faculty, 4 year colleges
Whitney	Grace	Head Start Collaboration Office	State Agencies, Head Start Collaboration Office

APPENDIX B:**CONNECTICUT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES DOMAIN DESCRIPTIONS****1. Building Meaningful Curriculum**

Early childhood teachers must have a firm understanding of relationship-based practice, personal knowledge of child development and all areas of development, in order to effectively support every child's growth in all domains, including children with special needs. They should be familiar with national and state early learning standards.

Teachers of young children use their knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child; individually and in groups. They use a curriculum-planning process that responds to the strengths, interests, and challenges of the children they teach. Teachers understand the importance of the academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas. Teachers are able to identify resources to deepen their understanding of academic content as needed. They use their own knowledge along with other resources to build a meaningful and appropriately challenging curriculum that achieves comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

They understand the importance of relationships and high-quality interactions in supporting successful learning and they provide a learning environment that is respectful, supportive, challenging and aesthetically pleasing which will have a positive impact on the whole child. They use their experience and knowledge of 1) the early learning standards, 2) current research, theory and best practice of how children learn and develop, 3) child assessment information and 4) the unique interests, strengths and needs of the children and families in the program to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful challenging curriculum for each child.

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to develop experiences that promote child development and learning. The CKC's describe the background knowledge and skills teachers need in order to effectively implement the ELDS. It is expected that teachers understand the learning goals and definitions of each learning domain as outlined in the CT ELDS.

2. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches for Teaching and Learning

Teaching, as defined in this competency, is the use of developmentally effective appropriate strategies and tools to promote development and learning, based on an understanding of the complexity of child characteristics and the intersect of relationships and interaction as the foundation of practice. This competency area focuses on the teacher's role in designing interactions and experiences.

Teachers of young children recognize that teaching is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. Teachers of young children should be familiar with a wide array of approaches, curriculum models, instructional strategies and tools. They understand that children construct knowledge through hands-on, engaging experiences with people and materials. Teachers of young children understand the goals, benefits, and limitations of equipment, materials, and daily routines. They demonstrate the ability to develop positive and respectful relationships that meet the needs of a diverse group of children. They support play as a vehicle for learning.

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to guide appropriate approaches for teaching and learning. It is expected that teachers understand the essential dispositions that underpin competent learning and the strategies to support such dispositions.

3. Promoting Child Development and Learning

Knowledge of child growth and development is the foundation for constructing the developmentally appropriate and meaningful experiences to support children's learning and development. Teachers of young children should understand how to promote young children's learning and development by tailoring experiences to nurture young children's individual nature thus enabling the child to develop his or her full potential.

Teachers working with young children must understand what to expect regarding children's range of abilities to be able to plan appropriate sequences of action, adjust teaching strategies, and pose manageable tasks and challenges to extend learning for all children. Teachers of young children recognize that while all children are born ready to learn, development in a single domain impacts and is impacted by learning and growth in other domains. They understand key developmental milestones and that development is progressive yet individualized. They should be familiar with various theoretical frameworks of child development, and able use this information to provide appropriate and meaningful early learning experiences for all children. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs to create learning environments that are respectful, supportive yet challenging and aesthetically pleasing for each child.

In addition to consideration of the child's age, teachers must consider each child's individuality in terms of distinct personality, developmental level, temperament, needs, learning styles, and ability levels. This competency includes recognition of the influence of a child's culture, abilities and special needs. Competent teachers of young children understand that an inclusive environment benefits both children with and without special needs, and be ready to embrace an inclusive philosophy.

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to develop experiences that promote child development and learning. The

following describes the background knowledge and skills teachers need in order to effectively implement the ELDS.

4. Observing, Documenting and Assessing Young Children

Assessment is the systematic collection of information and the subsequent analysis of a child's growth and development processes. The knowledge and skills to conduct responsible, ethical, and effective observation, screening, and assessment of young children, including but not limited to individual variations, developmental needs and the identification of special needs, are covered in this competency area.

Teachers must understand the goals, uses, benefits, and limitations of various assessment approaches. Teachers of young children must be familiar with multiple forms of assessment, including child observation as well as the use of technology in documentation, assessment and data collection. They recognize that regular and ongoing assessment is central to the practice of early childhood professionals. They conduct systematic observations and document them. They recognize assessment must take place continually over time.

Teachers of young children know that partnerships with families go beyond merely telling family members about the child's development; it actively seeks the family's perspective and genuinely uses this information to create a clearer picture of the child's development. They use assessment methods and tools that are current and congruent with what is known about developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive practice. They also use information from assessments in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to inform curricular and instructional modifications and to positively influence the development of every child.

5. Building Family and Community Partnerships

Families and communities form the context in which children live. Teachers of young children must recognize and respect that all children develop within the context of their families, and therefore embrace a myriad of different family structures and dynamics. This competency encompasses the knowledge, skills, and tendencies required to value and respond appropriately to all aspects of family diversity—such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, culture, family composition, religion, age, ability, and home language. Teachers seek out and embrace information from families and use research-based knowledge of family dynamics, family stages and parenthood to support their planning of experiences for the children.

Additionally, this competency area includes the ability to engage the community in support of children, at the local-program level, family home, and in the broader public arena. Teachers of young children understand that successful early childhood care and education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities. They also understand the complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create reciprocal relationships that support and empower families.

6. Promoting Health, Safety and Wellness

Foundational to all other teaching practices is assuring the health, safety and wellness of young children. The key concept in this competency is that children's health is not simply the absence of illness or injury; it encompasses safety, nutrition, fitness, and physical and emotional health.

Children's safety is the first and foremost responsibility of adults who provide care for them. Safety encompasses not only the physical aspect, but also the social and emotional aspects. Most basically, teachers must be able to ensure children's safety and be prepared to handle emergencies. Teachers of young children also need to stay current on state and federal regulations and research related to children's safety and health. Finally, they should promote the sound health, dental, nutritional, and emotional stability of young children and their families, by modeling these characteristics and connecting families to culturally appropriate community health resources.

7. Professionalism

Teachers should identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They must know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They should be committed to continuous, collaborative learning regarding their profession and to lifelong personal and professional growth. They value knowledgeable feedback, reflective input and critical perspectives on their work. They use such input to make informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources.

Early childhood educators need to understand the complex services that constitute and shape the early care and education system; their own participation as leaders; and their organizations' roles. They should be aware of larger public and private systems that shape the quality of services available to children and families. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies. They value the diversity of lifestyles, languages, beliefs, and cultural backgrounds that can be found in all aspects of our society, and advocate for policies which are free of bias and responsive to the differences in the needs of children.

APPENDIX C: CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK: ADAPTATION OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

The following is an adaptation to the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy to describe progressive complexity of thinking about the competencies associated with Connecticut's Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC's). Keep in mind the following important points:

- These levels are not to be associated with the progression along the career pathway.
- This information can be used for building professional learning experiences that assist individuals to progress in their ability to make decisions about their practice.
- This theoretical framework provides a roadmap for professional learning design and does not equate to any specific credential, license, or certification.

LEVEL	DEFINITION
Level 1: Knowledge and Understanding	Can name, recognize, recall relevant information from long-term memory, understand its content and construct meaning.
Level 2: Applying	Can apply content knowledge and information in the classroom setting. Carrying out or using a procedure through executing or implementing.
Level 3: Analyzing and Emergent Evaluating	Can break material into its component parts, in order to understand and determine how they relate to one another, and to an overall structure or purpose. Begins to compare, contrast, and experiment by differentiating, organizing, and identifying attributes.
Level 4: Evaluating and Creating	<p>Can critically reflect on knowledge and application, bringing together the knowledge in new combinations, thinking creatively about the knowledge to solve new problems, and working to change policies and practices that are not aligned with research-based best practices.</p> <p>Can make judgments about the merit of ideas, materials and methodologies by applying accepted standards and criteria, and if necessary, expanding upon them.</p> <p>Can think creatively. Is able to combine concepts and/or components to develop original ideas and new ways of looking at, and understanding, elements.</p>

APPENDIX D: CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES: DOMAINS, INDICATORS AND LEVELS

Codes within the document begin to depict an alignment to the Federal Criteria (FED), the Early Childhood Teacher Credential at the Associate or Bachelor Level (ECTC A or ECTC B), Neighboring States (MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, V), CT Association for Infant Mental Health (CTAIMH), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), Special Education (SE), Dual Language Learners (DLL), Cultural Responsiveness (CR). **Further coding and attribution to neighboring states is in process and will be added to the document along with a glossary.**

I. Building Meaningful Curriculum

Early childhood teachers must have a firm understanding of relationship-based practice, personal knowledge of child development and all areas of development, in order to effectively support every child's growth in all domains, including children with special needs.

They should be familiar with national and state early learning standards. Teachers of young children use their knowledge to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child; individually and in groups. They use a curriculum-planning process that responds to the strengths, interests, and challenges of the children they teach. Teachers understand the importance of the academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas. Teachers are able to identify resources to deepen their understanding of academic content as needed. They use their own knowledge along with other resources to build a meaningful and appropriately challenging curriculum that achieves comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

They understand the importance of relationships and high-quality interactions in supporting successful learning and they provide a learning environment that is respectful, supportive, challenging and aesthetically pleasing which will have a positive impact on the whole child. They use their experience and knowledge of 1) the early learning standards, 2) current research, theory and best practice of how children learn and develop, 3) child assessment information and 4) the unique interests, strengths and needs of the children and families in the program to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful challenging curriculum for each child.

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to develop experiences that promote child development and learning. The CKC's describe the background knowledge and skills teachers need in order to effectively implement the ELDS. It is expected that teachers understand the learning goals and definitions of each learning domain as outlined in the CT ELDS.

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Domain: Building Meaningful Curriculum (FED)

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to develop experiences that promote child development and learning. The following describes the background knowledge and skills teachers need in order to effectively implement the ELDS. **It is expected that teachers understand the learning goals and definitions of each learning domain as outlined in the CT ELDS.**

SUB-DOMAIN: USING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD MEANINGFUL CURRICULUM (NAEYC)

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Building Curriculum	<p>Has basic knowledge of the following content/academic areas: language and literacy; the arts; mathematics; physical activity and health; science and nutrition; and social studies, with special depth in the areas of language and literacy. (ECTC)</p> <p>Implements curriculum according to plans developed for children by staff. (ECTC, NAEYC)</p> <p>Demonstrates full understanding of and skill in use of program curricula. (ECTC, NAEYC)</p> <p>Understands that curriculum resources (books, website resources and commercially prepared curricula) vary in quality and that high quality resources reflect the knowledge and principals of early childhood development and learning.</p>	<p>Applies knowledge of quality curriculum to identify high quality resources (books, website resources and commercially prepared curricula).</p> <p>Demonstrates familiarity with authoritative resources to supplement their own content knowledge (ECTC B).</p> <p>Engages in work that demonstrates the basic knowledge and skill in the following content/academic areas: language and literacy; the arts; mathematics; physical activity and health; science and nutrition; and social studies, with special depth in the areas of language and literacy (ECTC A).</p>	<p>Participates in the selection of and advocates for high quality, developmentally appropriate curriculum resources.</p> <p>Engages in work that reflects advanced knowledge and skill in the development of learning in each content area: language and literacy; the arts; mathematics; physical activity and health; science and nutrition; and social studies, with special depth in the areas of language and literacy (ECTC B).</p> <p>Clarifies goals and features of specific curriculum in use.</p> <p>Uses their own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful challenging curriculum for each child.</p>	<p>Recommends curricula that are developmentally, culturally-linguistically appropriate and responsive to the needs and interests of children. (CR)</p> <p>Engages in action research to investigate the inter-relationship between content areas and creates multi-modality methods of delivery.</p> <p>Analyzes the effectiveness of curriculum through the lens of family, culture and community factors.</p>
Language development and communication. (ELDS)	Has basic knowledge of how language and communication skills develop sequentially and is	Plans and implements meaningful and intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants,	Works with children and their families, using community resources as needed, to maintain the child's home language (RI)	Analyzes and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to language

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	<p>dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences (RI).</p> <p>Understands that Dual Language Learners must have opportunities to progress in their home language as they are learning English (RI) (DLL).</p> <p>Recognizes that a rich vocabulary provides a strong foundation for later literacy.</p> <p>Engages in meaningful and extended conversation with individual children each day.</p> <p>Practices communicating with children in ways that respect family culture by acknowledging special words, names, routines, etc. (NH, pg 18). (DLL) (CR) (NY)</p> <p>Clarifies pronunciation of the child's name and provides linguistically and culturally appropriate materials. (DLL) (CR)</p>	<p>toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand and be able to do in the domain of language development and communication on a regular basis (RI, NY).</p> <p>Applies strategies in the classroom so that Dual Language Learners have opportunities to progress in their home language as they are learning English (RI) (DLL).</p> <p>Learns and uses culturally appropriate phrases in the child's first language and models good listening skills. (DLL) (CR)</p> <p>Engages in meaningful, contextual conversations with young children, using new words and their meanings, planning intentional environments and experiences to spark language.</p>	<p>(DLL).</p> <p>Incorporates research-based individualized instruction designed to promote English language development of Dual Language Learners (RI) (DLL)</p> <p>Demonstrates growing abilities to verbally stimulate conversation with DLLs using English. (DLL)</p> <p>Understands the stages of second language acquisition, receptive and expressive language. (DLL)</p>	<p>development and communication to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice (RI pg 31).</p> <p>Analyzes other curricular areas and creates opportunities to foster language and communication through other content area experiences.</p> <p>Demonstrates a variety of strategies that respond to the child's behaviors as they progress through different stages of second language acquisition. (DLL)</p>
<p>Domains of Learning (ELDS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social & Emotional Development • Cognition • Mathematics • Science • Language & Literacy • Social Studies • Physical Development & Health 	<p>Understands the learning goals and definitions of these domains as outlined in the ELDS. (ELDS)</p> <p>Understands that development in these domains is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences (RI pg 32).</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand and be able to do in the each domain (RI pg 32) as outlined in the ELDS.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in these domains to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum (RI pg 32).</p>	<p>Analyzes and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to these domains to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice (RI pg 32).</p>

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SUB-DOMAIN: Contextual Factors in Building Meaningful Curriculum				
CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment (VT) (NAEYC)	<p>Is committed to creating an inclusive classroom that values the inclusion of all children and benefits all children. (SE) (NY)</p> <p>Creates an environment – using the space, the materials and the routine – that encourages play, exploration and learning (VT)</p> <p>Understands that staff physical position in the classroom or playground impacts supervision of children.</p> <p>Adapts environment to accommodate children with special needs (SE)</p> <p>Designs the environment so that each child has a space for personal items to ensure his/her sense of belonging and security within the community. (NY)</p> <p>Adapts the indoor and outdoor environment, equipment, materials, experience and activities based upon information gathered in the process of curriculum planning.</p> <p>Creates environment that allows children to spend time alone, in small groups, and in large group settings. (NY)</p> <p>Supports an environment with developmentally appropriate toys, materials and environmental arrangement to promote development (ME)</p> <p>Understands and values access to the least restrictive environment.(SE)</p>	<p>Regularly uses some strategies to ensure proper supervision.</p> <p>Prepares and guides children as appropriate in their engagement in and use of the indoor and outdoor environment, equipment, materials, experience and activities.</p> <p>Applies knowledge about children’s learning and development to create healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging learning environments.</p> <p>Plans the classroom/environment and learning experiences in consultation, as appropriate, with service providers to meet legal requirements as well as children’s individual needs and interests.</p>	<p>Analyzes classroom layout to optimize supervision.</p> <p>Analyzes and evaluates the environment when trying to find causes for challenging behaviors. Makes changes as needed. (SE)</p> <p>Assesses and adjusts environments based on knowledge of children’s learning goals.</p> <p>Collaborates with staff and colleagues to ensure that all children participate fully in indoor and outdoor learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Uses numerous supervision strategies consistently.</p> <p>Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on learning environments and various teaching approaches.</p> <p>Advocates for access to appropriate learning environments.</p>
Interactions with Materials	<p>Understands that children learn through interaction with materials as they explore, problem-solve and discover.</p> <p>Utilizes materials that demonstrate acceptance of all</p>	<p>Facilitates children’s learning as they interact with materials to explore, problem-solve, and discover.</p>	<p>Reflects on children’s learning through their interactions with materials as they explore, problem-</p>	<p>Evaluates materials choices to enhance various learning experiences and</p>

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	<p>children's gender, family, race, culture and special needs. (NY) (SE) (CR)</p> <p>Chooses toys and materials that children find interesting and keeps multiples of favorites.</p> <p>Utilizes knowledge of child development and individual children to select materials.</p>	<p>Appropriately uses technology (computers, digital and video) to support children's learning.</p> <p>Intentionally selects and rotates materials that reflect children's interests, learning styles and stages of development. (NY)</p> <p>Provides open-ended materials that encourage problem solving and creativity and challenge children to construct knowledge in various domains.</p>	<p>solve, and discover in order to deepen understanding.</p> <p>Adapts and modifies materials to accommodate children with special needs. (SE)</p> <p>Uses technology, including adaptive technology, in appropriate ways (VT)</p>	<p>support optimal development.</p> <p>Critically reflects on the possible use of materials, including assistive technology to meet specific needs of selected students with varying abilities. (SE)</p>
Daily Routines and Structural Support (NAEYC)	<p>Uses everyday classroom routines to deliver meaningful curriculum.</p> <p>Has a daily routine that is predictable yet allows flexibility to support children's abilities and interests (VT)</p> <p>Maintains a daily schedule that provides balance between active and quiet, child-directed and teacher-directed, individual and group, and indoor and outdoor activities.</p> <p>Supports children with separation and transition.</p>	<p>Uses routine activities (diapering, dressing) and daily transition times to support curricular/learning goals (VT)</p> <p>Plans transitions which are efficient and maximize learning opportunities.</p> <p>Establishes and maintains a daily schedule that is flexible and responsive to the needs and interests of the group and the individuals within the group.</p>	<p>Creates environments that are culturally, ethnically, racially, linguistically diverse (VT) (CR)</p> <p>Observes the environment and makes adjustments to reduce behavior issues and maximizes appropriate use of materials (VT) (FED)</p>	<p>Analyzes and adapts daily schedule to reflect the needs and interests of the group and the individuals within the group.</p>
Families and Communities	<p>Understands that families should be involved in the creation and/or implementation of curriculum.</p> <p>Supports parents by suggesting how they can promote and retain first language development.</p>	<p>Creates an environment reflective of the diversity of families enrolled as well as the larger society including those with special needs and people from many ages. (NAEYC) (FED)</p> <p>Uses families as a resource to implement the curriculum (read to the class, bring in materials, talk about their home life with children). (DLL)</p>	<p>Uses the community around them as a resource when building curriculum. (SE) (CR)</p> <p>Is responsive to community needs when building curriculum. (CR)</p>	<p>Utilizes families to evaluate the curriculum and determine if it is meeting the mission of the program.</p>

II. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches for Teaching and Learning

Teaching, as defined in this competency, is the use of developmentally effective appropriate strategies and tools to promote development and learning, based on an understanding of the complexity of child characteristics and the intersect of relationships and interaction as the foundation of practice. This competency area focuses on the teacher's role in designing interactions and experiences.

Teachers of young children recognize that teaching is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. Teachers of young children should be familiar with a wide array of approaches, curriculum models, instructional strategies and tools. They understand that children construct knowledge through hands-on, engaging experiences with people and materials. Teachers of young children understand the goals, benefits, and limitations of equipment, materials, and daily routines. They demonstrate the ability to develop positive and respectful relationships that meet the needs of a diverse group of children. They support play as a vehicle for learning.

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to guide appropriate approaches for teaching and learning. It is expected that teachers understand the essential dispositions that underpin competent learning and the strategies to support such dispositions.

Domain: Using Developmentally Effective Approaches for Teaching and Learning (FED)

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to guide appropriate approaches for teaching and learning. It is expected that teachers understand the essential dispositions that underpin competent learning and the strategies to support such dispositions.

SUB-DOMAIN: FOSTERING COMPETENT LEARNERS (ELDS) (FED)

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Essential Dispositions (ELDS) (NAEYC)	<p>Understands the role and strategies for positive classroom management and positive child behaviors to support learning (ELDS) (ECTC)</p> <p>Encourages children to positively interact with adults and peers to support collaborative learning</p>	<p>Encourages children to use critical thinking skills to help them organize information</p> <p>Understands higher order thinking framework (Bloom's Taxonomy) as a structure to plan engaging experiences that foster such thinking.</p>	<p>Analyzes children's specific needs and tailors his/her strategy to help children develop creative thinking and problem solving.</p> <p>Creates multiple opportunities for children to develop their creative</p>	<p>Continuously researches and applies innovative approaches to expand own repertoire of instructional</p>

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	Fosters children's ability to adapt to new situations and children's interests	Uses questioning techniques and builds experiences based on higher order thinking model.	thinking and problem solving skills.	approaches.
	Encourages children to explore and see new information and ask questions		Engage children in situations/experiences where reflection is required.	
Interactions and Experiences (VT) (NAEYC)	Understands that learning is facilitated through adult-child interactions.	Establishes individual relationships with each child through one-on-one interactions, individualized observations, and conversations with family members. Develops attached relationships with those for whom she is primary caregiver.	Encourages children to develop independence by providing physical and emotional security and opportunities for children to master new skills, experiences success, and safely take risks (VT)	Models positive relationships and respectful and supportive interactions among children, families, teachers and other professionals. (NAEYC)
	Promotes positive relationships and respectful and supportive interactions among teachers, families and children. (NAEYC) (CR)		Evaluates a variety of positive guidance techniques and selects appropriate methods for the specific situation or child (VT) (ECTC)	Analyzes own relationships and interactions with children, families and teachers and implements strategies to continuously improve relationships. (CR) (NAEYC)
	Responds to children's initiations and requests, including the nonverbal cues of infants and toddlers (VT)	Demonstrates and facilitates developmentally appropriate interactions between and among children and adults to support learning.	Reflects on situations in order to identify when to interact with a child to deepen the child's understanding.	
	Understand the importance of trusting relationships with children where they feel safe, secure, and valued (VT) (ECTC)	Promotes positive, pro-social relationships among children and helps each child feel accepted (VT) (ECTC)		
	Understands that positive relationships with children, families and teachers are a foundation for all healthy development and learning. (NAEYC) (CR) (VT)	Guides children to resolve interpersonal conflicts and solve problems with others (VT)		

SUB-DOMAIN: TEACHING & FACILITATING

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Intersect of Content and Implementation	<p>Has a beginning understanding of current theoretical perspectives and research specific to teaching and facilitating.</p> <p>Has working knowledge of principles of the CT. Preschool Curriculum Framework and/or other early learning curricula.</p> <p>Curriculum goals and objectives guide teachers ongoing assessments of children's progress (NAEYC 2.A.05)</p>	<p>Identifies and applies sound theoretical perspectives that undergird teaching strategies.</p> <p>Develops program policies and methodology that supports children's learning in all domains.</p> <p>Able to explain to staff, colleagues and families the principles of curriculum planning: observation, assessment, documentation, interpretation, planning and implementation.</p>	<p>Consistently, with family input, incorporates family, culture and community factors into curriculum planning. (CR)</p> <p>Monitors program practices for consistency with principles of developmentally, culturally-linguistically appropriate curriculum planning. (CR)</p>	<p>Applies information from related fields such as health, mental health, etc to develop a holistic approach to early childhood education (RI 48).</p>

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	<p>Understands the importance of incorporating family, culture, and community factors when planning curriculum. (NAEYC) (CR)</p> <p>Understanding of health and impact on children's learning and development.</p>	<p>Incorporates family, culture and community factors into curriculum planning. (CR)</p>	<p>Analyzes and integrates sound theoretical perspectives into teaching strategies in curriculum development.</p> <p>Engages staff, colleagues and families in discussing curricular goals along a developmental continuum.</p>	
<p>Uses a diversity of instructional approaches (NAEYC) (ECTC B)</p>	<p>Understands and values play as one of the primary vehicles for learning in all domains. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Creates experiences that are based on children's natural curiosity, deepen their knowledge, and sustain active engagement with materials and ideas. (ELDS) (NY)</p> <p>Creates experiences that are planned in a way that infuses diversity and meets the needs of children with special needs, children that are Dual Language Learners and children from diverse backgrounds. (DLL)</p> <p>Demonstrates recognition of the various strengths, their characteristics and their impact upon the teaching-learning process.</p> <p>Recognizes that developmentally appropriate practice includes both typical developmental characteristics as well as those that are unique to each child (RI 27)</p> <p>Understands that curriculum is delivered in part through genuine and nurturing relationships.</p> <p>Identifies a variety of positive guidance techniques (VT)</p>	<p>Implements a learning environment that maximizes play as a vehicle for learning.</p> <p>Utilizes engaging conversations with adults and thought provoking questions with adults to facilitate learning.</p> <p>Plans and implements developmentally appropriate learning experiences that are tailored to each child's interests, learning styles and individual stage of development and unique needs to create meaningful play opportunities and enable a child to develop his or her full potential. (DLL)</p> <p>Provides meaningful individualized instruction for children with strengths, varying abilities and behaviors. (SE) (ECTC A)</p> <p>Sets realistic expectations for young children for behavior and apply appropriate child guidance strategies according to the individual child and the situation (ECTC A).</p> <p>Uses a variety of positive guidance strategies that respect children and teach appropriate social skills (VT)</p>	<p>Engages staff, colleagues and families in discussion about the benefit, characteristics and limitations of child-initiated play and exploration and adult-facilitated strategies that support learning and development.</p> <p>Collaborates with other significant adults in planning appropriate activities, routines and experiences for individual children including special needs and dual language learners. (SE) (DLL)</p> <p>Analyzes the impact of parent/family understanding and acceptance of a child's disability upon the child's cognitive and social abilities, attitudes, values, and interests. (SE)</p>	<p>Continually analyzes and revises planned play experiences to deepen children's understanding of concepts. (ECTC B)</p> <p>Integrates the use of accommodations and modifications as an increase of self-regulation and independence of students with disabilities. (ECTC B) (SE)</p>
Individual Ways	Recognizes that each child is unique and learns	Provides opportunities and experiences to	Utilizes knowledge about	Uses information

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<p>of Knowing and Learning (NAEYC) (ECTC B)</p>	<p>in a distinctive way.</p> <p>Show genuine interest in children's experiences, ideas and work and focus' activities on children's interest areas (NY) (NAEYC)</p> <p>Is attentive and responsive to children's needs, interests and verbal and non-verbal cues (NY) (NAEYC) (CR) (DLL)</p> <p>Recognizes that children need time to grasp concepts or practice skills. (ELDS)</p> <p>Understands and values that each child has unique characteristics including developmental levels, learning styles, temperament, and interests. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Understands that children's development can be impacted by a myriad of short and long-term risk factors such as poverty, illness, changes in family structure, etc.</p>	<p>support each child's unique and distinctive way of knowing and learning. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Responds consistently to each child's individual needs. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Uses responses to children's questions as a means to reinforce or expand upon concepts.</p> <p>Anticipates emerging skills and plans experiences to allow children to build and extend knowledge and skills over time.</p>	<p>individual children with special needs and consistently makes accommodations and adaptations to ensure their inclusion. (ECTC B) (SE)</p> <p>Analyzes own instructional approaches to support individual children's development and learning.</p> <p>Collaborates with a multi-disciplinary team and participates as appropriate in the development of IEPs that incorporate effective practices and focus on families' priorities and concerns, as well as children's development and interests. (SE)</p> <p>Reflects upon emerging skills and plans experiences to allow all children with differing learning styles to build and extend knowledge and skills over time.</p> <p>Pays close attention to the level of support a child needs to perform a task and acknowledges even small amounts of progress. (SE) (ELDS) (DLL)</p>	<p>gained from multiple sources to provide welcoming strategies matched for each child's individual needs including culture and language. (ECTC B)</p> <p>Communicates with staff, families and colleagues to support children's learning through repetition in building and extending children's knowledge and skills. (ECTC B)</p> <p>Evaluates learning experiences through the lens of current theory and research about children's ways of knowing and learning.</p>
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III. Promoting Child Development and Learning

Knowledge of child growth and development is the foundation for constructing the developmentally appropriate and meaningful experiences to support children's learning and development. Teachers of young children should understand how to promote young children's learning and development by tailoring experiences to nurture young children's individual nature thus enabling the child to develop his or her full potential.

Teachers working with young children must understand what to expect regarding children's range of abilities to be able to plan appropriate sequences of action, adjust teaching strategies, and pose manageable tasks and challenges to extend learning for all children. Teachers of young children recognize that while all children are born ready to learn, development in a single domain impacts and is impacted by learning and growth in other domains. They understand key developmental milestones and that development is progressive yet individualized. They should be familiar with various theoretical frameworks of child development, and able use this information to provide appropriate and meaningful early learning experiences for all children. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs to create learning environments that are respectful, supportive yet challenging and aesthetically pleasing for each child.

In addition to consideration of the child's age, teachers must consider each child's individuality in terms of distinct personality, developmental level, temperament, needs, learning styles, and ability levels. This competency includes recognition of the influence of a child's culture, abilities and special needs. Competent teachers of young children understand that an inclusive environment benefits both children with and without special needs, and be ready to embrace an inclusive philosophy.

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to develop experiences that promote child development and learning. The following describes the background knowledge and skills teachers need in order to effectively implement the ELDS.

Domain: Promoting Child Development and Learning

The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) outline the skills, knowledge and dispositions children birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains. The ELDS should be used to develop experiences that promote child development and learning. The following describes the background knowledge and skills teachers need in order to effectively implement the ELDS.

SUB-DOMAIN: CHILD DEVELOPMENT

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
General Knowledge of Domains, Stages and Milestones (NY, RI, NAEYC)	<p>Knows and recognizes developmental differences and needs.</p> <p>Understands that children's development includes several interrelated domains - physical, cognitive, social and emotional – that influence each other and develop simultaneously (RI 26) (NAEYC) (ECTC A)</p> <p>Recognizes the major developmental milestones of children birth to age five (RI 26). (NAEYC)</p> <p>Understands that each child's development typically proceeds in a predictable and recognizable sequence (RI 26) with variations due to distinct personality, inherited traits and unique temperament, allowing children to develop at their own pace. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Knows that face-to-face interactions which include rich and varied language are crucial to development. (CR)</p>	<p>Displays in their work knowledge about individuality in the basic topics of infancy and early childhood development or more advanced knowledge in one developmental phase (ECTC A). (ECTC A)</p> <p>Understands current research regarding the importance of early experiences on the development of the brain. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Uses knowledge of child development in order to provide developmentally appropriate and engaging experiences and interactions. (NAEYC)</p>	<p>Begins to apply knowledge about children with special needs and makes accommodations and adaptations to ensure their inclusion. (SE)</p> <p>Demonstrates an understanding of and applies in the program setting current research and knowledge about various theories of child development including brain development, motor development, cognitive processes and language development, early learning, temperament, attachment theory, emotional intelligence, self-regulation, self- development and executive functioning, peer relations, modes of play and exploration, and common types of exceptional development of young children from birth to five years (ECTC B) (NAEYC)</p>	<p>Analyzes and evaluates own practice in relationship to current theory and research on child growth and development and applies new knowledge to one's practice.</p>

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	Recognizes and provides for adaptations to the environment and activities to allow those with special needs to engage in healthy mind and body experiences (CR, SE)			
Fostering Healthy Attachment and Relationships	<p>Understands the importance of healthy attachment and resiliency of young children (RI 26) (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.2) (NAEYC) (VT)</p> <p>Helps children to achieve self-regulation and acquire coping skills (NY pg 11)</p> <p>Provide children with positive relationships that foster social and emotional development (NAEYC)</p> <p>Is aware of diverse family structures and cultural differences in child rearing practices and beliefs (NH pg 29) in order to promote healthy attachments. (CR)</p> <p>Understanding and identifying each child's ethnic and cultural values.</p>	<p>Uses knowledge of healthy attachment theory to support children's personal connections with adults and peers, and help them prepare for separation e.g. during changes in staffing patterns and prolonged absences. (VT)</p> <p>Explains the variety of ways children experience grief and loss and how they relate to attachment (NH pg 13).</p> <p>Identifies basic strategies that communicate a safe and welcoming environment for children and families. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Establishes trusting relationships that supports the parent(s) and young child in their relationships with each other and that facilitates needed change (CTAIMH-E Level 1, p. 3). (NAEYC)</p>	<p>Differentiates between over dependency upon parents and lack of opportunities to exercise independence.</p> <p>Responds appropriately to the variety of ways children experience grief and loss.</p> <p>Advocates for continuity of care within the classroom and program to ensure that children are able to form a relationship with a consistent caregiver. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Uses the child's first language, e.g. selected vocabulary or phrases, to facilitate interaction and model the value of the language for children and parents, and other adults. (DLL)</p>	<p>Creates a systemic approach to community outreach to ensure continuity of services for children, staff and families who experience grief and loss. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Promotes parent/caregiver competence in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facing challenges • Resolving crises and reducing the likelihood of future crises • Solving problems of basic needs and familial conflict • (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.3)
SUB-DOMAIN: INFLUENCES ON DEVELOPMENT				
CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Environmental Influences (NY)	Recognizes that there are multiple environmental influences including home language, culture, family composition, ethnicity, home environment, and community characteristics that affect the development and learning of children in	Create environments for young children that are inclusive of children with diverse learning needs and support children's health, respect their culture, unique family composition and individuality, promote positive	Demonstrate their understanding of the essentials of developmental research and describe the principles that they are using as the basis for creating effective learning environments for all young children (ECTC B).	

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	<p>both positive and negative ways (RI 27) (NAEYC) (CR) (ECTC A)</p> <p>Uses knowledge of environmental influences to adapt environments and learning experiences for individual children. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Investigates and provides for children's sensory preferences (NY).</p>	<p>development, and challenge children to gain new competencies (ECTC B).</p> <p>Provide activities that are coherent with respect to their intended goals for early learning, drawing across multiple systems of influences and aspects of development to support the whole young child (ECTC B).</p> <p>Creates environments for young children that support children's health, respect their culture and individuality, promote positive development, and challenge children to gain new competencies (ECTC A). (CR)</p>	<p>Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research related to environmental influences and applies that knowledge to one's practice. (ECTC B)</p>	
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Risk factors impacting children (NY)	Recognizes that children's growth and development can be impacted by short and long term risk factors, such as socioeconomic level, access to resources, poverty, illness, family dynamics, health, access to health services (physical, dental, and mental), lack of access to play environments, changes in family structure, stressful environments, community tragedies (ECTC A)	Applies knowledge of child development to identify and be responsive to the impact of risk factors on child development. (ECTC B) Provides direct care and teaching/developmental activities to infant, very young children, and families with multiple, complex risk factors to help ensure healthy outcomes and the optimal development of the child in all domains (physical, social, emotional, cognitive) (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.3) (ECTC A)	Identifies appropriate resources and services to address risk factors impacting children, and partners with families to make appropriate referrals where needed. Applies strategies to support children's resiliency to mitigate the impact of potential risk factors in their lives. (ECTC B)	Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research related to risk factors and applies that knowledge to one's practice. (ECTC B)
Special Needs (RI)	Is aware of laws and policies in the field of special education and treatment of individuals with special needs. (SE)(NAEYC) Knows where to access resource and referral sources for assistance with Birth to 3 and preschool special education. (NAEYC)			

IV. Observing, Documenting and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families (FED)

Assessment is the systematic collection of information and the subsequent analysis of a child's growth and development processes. The knowledge and skills to conduct responsible, ethical, and effective observation, screening, and assessment of young children, including but not limited to individual variations, developmental needs and the identification of special needs, are covered in this competency area.

Teachers must understand the goals, uses, benefits, and limitations of various assessment approaches. Teachers of young children must be familiar with multiple forms of assessment, including child observation as well as the use of technology in documentation, assessment and data collection. They recognize that regular and ongoing assessment is central to the practice of early childhood professionals. They conduct systematic observations and document them. They recognize assessment must take place continually over time.

Teachers of young children know that a partnership with families goes beyond merely telling family members about the child's development; it actively seeks the family's perspective and genuinely uses this information to create a clearer picture of the child's development. They use assessment methods and tools that are current and congruent with what is known about developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive practice. They also use information from assessments in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to inform curricular and instructional modifications and to positively influence the development of every child.

Domain: Observing, Documenting and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families

The following describes the knowledge and skills expected of early education teachers to utilize appropriate screening and assessment tools as well as implement intentional teaching based on observing, documenting and assessing child growth and development as outlined in the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS).

SUB-DOMAIN: UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICING RESPONSIBLE ASSESSMENT TO PROMOTE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR EACH CHILD, INCLUDING THE USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Knowledge of early childhood assessments (FED) (NAEYC)	Recognizes that observation and assessment are ongoing processes. Has a working knowledge of the variety of assessment methods, both formative and summative	Explains the value and importance of practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child (ECTC A). Explains the reason for and use of assistive technology in assessment of	Engages in assessment practices that promote positive outcomes for individual children (ECTC B). [VA1 Level 3] (DLL) Implements assistive technology in the process of assessing children	Critically analyzes assessment tools and strategies used for determining children's learning goals for validity and reliability. [VA1 Level 4] (RI) Collaborates to create partnerships for assessment [VA1 Level 4]

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	<p>and the benefits of using a variety of assessment strategies.</p> <p>Demonstrates familiarity with the IDEA mandates and the role of the IFSP and IEP in supporting children's development (ECTC) (NAEYC) (SE)</p> <p>Understands that assessment is ongoing and should be integrated into daily curriculum. (RI)</p>	<p>children with disabilities (ECTC A) (SE)</p> <p>Understands the purposes and appropriateness of various developmental screening and assessment instruments and procedures. (ECTC A) (ECTC B)</p> <p>Understands that standardized assessments must be used for purposes for which they are intended and only administered by trained individuals. (RI)</p>	<p>with disabilities to promote positive outcomes for individual children. (ECTC B). (SE)</p> <p>Can select and identify early childhood assessments by purpose and methodology. (SE)</p> <p>Analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of various assessment methodologies and makes appropriate choices for various populations and situations. (RI) (ELDS) (DLL)</p>	
<p>Conducting Developmentally Appropriate Authentic Assessments and if appropriate formal assessments (ongoing, natural settings, meaningful activities) (RI 42)</p>	<p>Ensures that assessment strategies are responsive to all children including those that are DLL, special needs, or from diverse backgrounds. (NAEYC) (RI)</p> <p>Understands the importance of gathering information about the child over time, in natural settings, while children are engaged in meaningful activities (RI pg 42).</p> <p>Assesses children's progress across all developmental areas.</p> <p>Formally and informally observes the parent(s) or caregiver(s) and infant/young child understand the nature of their relationship, developmental strengths, and capacities for change (CTAIMH-E, Level I, P. 2)</p>	<p>Applies the cycle of assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation, including a variety of assessment strategies, to gather meaningful and objective information to support each child's individual development. (NY)</p> <p>Ensures that appropriate modifications and/or accommodations specific to special needs, e.g. disability, non-English speaking, are in place during assessments. (SE) (NAYEC) (DLL)</p> <p>Consistently collects assessment information from multiple sources which objectively illustrates what children know and are able to do in relation to learning goals. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Identifies children for screening or assessment to address potential developmental delays or disabilities. (ECTC)</p>	<p>Use assessment practices that reflect educational, legal, and ethical issues (ECTC B) (NAEYC) (ECTC A)</p> <p>Analyzes and evaluates observation and assessment data and applies knowledge to practice. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Select and administer functionally, developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate assessments. (RI) (ECTC A)</p> <p>Analyzes and evaluates observation and assessment data and applies knowledge to practice.</p> <p>Implements responsible assessment processes into daily practice that considers how formal/standardized assessments are integrated into the overall classroom assessment plan and implements them as appropriate to reduce and/or eliminate negative influences on the assessment</p>	<p>Analyzes the effectiveness of authentic assessment practices to gather meaningful and objective information and utilizes that information to refine one's assessment plan (RI pg 42) (NAEYC)</p> <p>Ensures that consideration is given to cultural, linguistic and environmental influences during the planning, selecting, adapting, modifying and implementing of all assessment procedures. (ELDS) (DLL) (CR)</p> <p>Evaluates current research, emerging developments, and best practices related to the assessment of young children.</p> <p>Uses assessment and data including observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches, including the use of technology in documentation,</p>

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			process and results. (RI pg 42).	assessment and data collection for its intended purpose. (NAEYC) (FED)
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Observing and Documenting (NAEYC)	<p>Understands the importance of documenting assessment information (RI pg 44) (RI)</p> <p>Observes children without bias, showing objectivity, fairness. (ECTC)</p> <p>Identifies opportunities within the classroom environment to collect assessment information (RI pg 42).</p>	<p>Begins to create assessment documentation which is linked to learning goals; is objective and specific; and includes enough detail to give a third party a complete understanding of the assessment event. (RI pg 44) (NAEYC)</p> <p>Monitors and observes children, knowing which children are able to interact with peers easily and happily at their developmental level and which ones have more difficulty and creates opportunities for the formation of positive connections with peers.</p>	<p>Consistently creates assessment documentation which is linked to learning goals; is objective and specific; and includes enough detail to give a third party a complete understanding of the assessment event. (RI pg 44) (NAEYC)</p>	<p>Analyzes the effectiveness of practices uses to document assessment information and utilizes that information to refine one's assessment plan. (RI pg 44) (NAEYC)</p>
Assessment in Curriculum Planning	<p>Understands and values the importance of utilizing child assessment information when planning curriculum.(RI pg 45) (NAEYC)</p> <p>Authentic assessment practices are embedded within the regular classroom experiences and routines and conducted by those who are familiar to the child.</p> <p>Communicates understanding of the benefits of using a variety of assessment strategies and the goals, benefits and appropriate uses of assessment including its use in development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children. (ECTC) (NAEYC) (DLL)(ECTC A)</p>	<p>Utilizes observation and assessment results to plan developmentally appropriate curriculum. (RI pg 45) (NAEYC) (ETCT A)</p> <p>Use responsible assessment to enhance children's abilities and to identify individual differences and unique objectives. (ECTC B) (NAYEC) (SE)</p> <p>Uses assessments to plan and modify environments, curriculum, and teaching to meet children's needs including for use in planned interventions and referral for special services (RI pg 45) (NAEYC) (SE)</p>	<p>Utilizes assessment info from a variety of sources to develop curriculum for individuals, small groups, and large groups of children. (RI pg 45)</p> <p>Develops multi-level learning opportunities in response to assessment information to meet the needs of children at different places on the development continuum. (RI pg 45 some) (DLL) (SE)</p>	<p>Continuously evaluates the assessment system to determine its effectiveness in informing curriculum and adapts as needed. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Performs developmental screening and/or adapt screening and assessment procedures to meet the individual needs of children, the culture of their families and the setting. (ECTC) (NAEYC) (CR)</p>

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SUB-DOMAIN: COMMUNICATING ASSESSMENT RESULTS AND INVOLVING FAMILIES AND OTHERS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS (RI Pg46) (NAEYC)				
CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Involves families in assessment procedures. (NAEYC)	<p>Articulates the ethical dimensions of assessment, including confidentiality. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Informs families ahead of time of the assessment practices.</p> <p>With families, assesses, interprets results and adjusts developmental and learning goals to meet the changing needs of the child and family. (ECTC A)</p>	<p>Includes other adults who are important to the child, in the observation process.</p> <p>Involves the family when making referrals for screening and/or child assessment. (ECTC A) (SE)</p>	Demonstrate essential skills in using assessments, interpreting assessment results, and using formal assessment information to influence practice for making appropriate referrals. (ECTC A)	Works in the community to develop guidelines for a culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate assessment and transition process for dual- language learners in early childhood settings. (CR)
Values diverse family structures and cultures when explaining information in ways that families will understand. (NAEYC)	<p>Exchanges complete and unbiased information in a supportive manner with families and other team members (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.2) (CR)</p> <p>Communicates with families about the value of assessment and its role in supporting children's learning and development.</p> <p>Demonstrates sensitivity to family culture, values, home language, and literacy level when communicating about assessment procedures or results with families. (CR) (DLL)</p>	<p>Shares assessment information in ways that address language differences but using interpreters and translated documents. (DLL)</p> <p>Whenever possible, before and after the administration of assessments, attempt to communicate information in the parents' native language (written and oral). (DLL)</p>	<p>Informs families about state Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education rules and regulations regarding Assessment. (SE)</p> <p>Explain assessment goals and benefits to colleagues or families. (ECTC)</p>	Advocates and facilitates discussions among early childhood educators and families on the benefits and limitations of observational information.
Professional partnerships (NAEYC)	<p>Understands that assessment information comes from a variety of sources (families, other teachers, specialists). (ECTC A)</p> <p>Understands that child assessment information is confidential and the sharing of this information is governed by program policy. (RI)</p> <p>Understands the purpose and value of sharing child assessment information with families and other professionals. (ECTC A)</p>	<p>Incorporates assessment information from a variety of sources (families, other teachers, specialists, peers, child care providers) when seeking to describe what children know and are able to do.</p> <p>Assists staff and families in accessing diagnostic assessments, extra services and/or other supports as needed.(SE)</p> <p>Facilitate referrals based on screening, observation and child assessment.</p>	<p>Works in partnership with others in using assessments that are aligned with curriculum or developmental goals, inclusive of the activities prescribed in a child's IFSP/IEP. (ECTC) (SE)</p> <p>Analyzes assessment information to determine whether further evaluation by other professionals is warranted. (RI pg 45)</p>	Advocates and encourages diverse relationships with other professionals to ensure collaboration.

V. Building Family and Community Relationships

Families and communities form the context in which children live. Teachers of young children must recognize and respect that all children develop within the context of their families, and therefore embrace a myriad of different family structures and dynamics. This competency encompasses the knowledge, skills, and tendencies required to value and respond appropriately to all aspects of family diversity—such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, culture, family composition, religion, age, ability, and home language. Teachers seek out and embrace information from families and use research-based knowledge of family dynamics, family stages and parenthood to support their planning of experiences for the children.

Additionally, this competency area includes the ability to engage the community in support of children, at the local-program level, family home, and in the broader public arena. Teachers of young children understand that successful early childhood care and education depends upon partnerships with children’s families and communities. They also understand the complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create reciprocal relationships that support and empower families.

Domain: Building Family and Community Relationships

The following describes the knowledge and skills expected of early education teachers to build family and community relationships that support collaborative understanding and engagement in supporting child growth and development in all domains of learning.

SUB-DOMAIN: CREATING RESPECTFUL, RECIPROCAL AND TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Family Systems	<p>Understands that each child grows up in a unique environment and is affected in different ways by the adults and children around her/him. (CR)</p> <p>Understands the relationship between family functioning and positive child outcomes. (RI) (NAEYC)</p> <p>Understands the dynamics and complexity of family systems. (RI) (ECTC B)</p>	<p>Seeks information from families regarding variations across cultures in terms of family strengths, expectations, values and child rearing practices (RI) (NY)</p> <p>Identifies and responds effectively to emerging family issues.</p> <p>Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics and</p>	<p>Understands the characteristics of Connecticut communities, especially the effects of racial-ethnic isolation and changing demographics on families and children’s learning outcomes. (ECTC) (CR)</p>	<p>Applies understanding of cultural competence to communicate effectively, establish positive relationships with families, and demonstrate respect for the uniqueness of each family’s culture (CTAIMH-E, Level 1, p. 2) (CR)</p>

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	Demonstrates respect for the family role as the primary educator, advocate, and “expert” on their own child and actively seeks family opinion and input. (RI. p. 21)	respecting the differing structures, languages and cultures of each child and how that can affect development. (NAEYC) (DLL) (NY)		
Communication	<p>Communicates regularly, respectfully and effectively with families in a family-friendly and culturally appropriate way. (R.I.21) (N). (NAEYC) (NY) (ECTC B)</p> <p>Creates opportunities for two way communication to build relationships with families based on mutual trust and understanding. (CR) (NY)</p> <p>Communicates information pertaining to safety regulations and standards to families.</p>	<p>Utilizes a range of techniques to communicate effectively with all families, especially families with linguistic differences. (DLL) (NY)</p> <p>Shares with families an understanding of infant and family relationship development (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p. 2).</p>	Obtains translation services as necessary to ensure effective communication with families who may experience a communication barrier (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.4) (DLL)	<p>Structures connections w/families to inform instructional design that is culturally consistent and builds upon the strengths of dual language learners and their families. (CR)</p> <p>Observes and constructs reciprocal relationships with families, independently or as part of a team. (ECTC A)</p>
Professional relationships (NY).	<p>Demonstrates and maintains positive and appropriate relationships with families. (NAEYC)</p> <p>Maintains appropriate personal boundaries with young children and families (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p. 3).</p>		Engages and supports families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships that incorporate family and community strengths in their approach to early learning in the classroom. (ECTC A) (NAEYC)	<p>Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on developing relationships with families. (RI)</p> <p>Serves as a role model and mentor to others on developing positive relationships with families. (RI)</p>

SUB-DOMAIN: ENGAGING FAMILIES IN THEIR CHILDREN’S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Family Engagement Opportunities (NY) (NAEYC) (ECTC A)	<p>Understands that meaningful opportunities for family engagement linked to children’s learning goals occur both in the classroom and at home. (RI) (NY)</p> <p>Creates and maintains a safe and welcoming environment for families, including providing a quiet space for families to nurse, soothe or comfort a</p>	<p>Supports the parent’s role by providing relevant information about child development and learning and healthy attachment. (RI)</p> <p>Provides opportunities for family engagement both in the classroom and at home that build upon families’ cultural-linguistic</p>	<p>Consistently provides opportunities for families to be engaged in their child’s education in a way that reflects cultural and linguistic differences. (RI)(CR)</p> <p>Evaluates and improves family engagement opportunities on a regular basis to meet the needs of current families. (RI)</p>	Serves as a role model and mentor to others on involving families in their child’s development and learning. (NY)

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	child (RI). (NAEYC)	background, strengths, skills, talents, interests and availability. (RI) (DLL) Provides opportunities for family engagement both in the classroom and at home tied to established learning goals for children. (RI)	Supports and reinforces parent's strengths, emerging parenting competencies, and positive parent- young child interactions (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p. 2)	
Special education and health needs (NY) (RI) (NAEYC) (SE)	Helps all families understand the benefits, for all children, of integrating children with special education and health needs. Knows about available services (RI p. 23)	Helps families obtain clear and understandable information about their child's special education and health needs. (RI) Helps families advocate for special needs and services (RI p. 23)	As appropriate and desired, provides additional information to parents related to disabilities. Supports families in the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and other individualized plans for children. (DLL)	Creates opportunities to share with peers information about accommodations and modifications for children with a disability. Collaborates with other service providers to ensure classroom-based comprehensive services to children and families; serves as an advocate for families when necessary.
SUB-DOMAIN: UTILIZING COMMUNITY RESOURCES TO SUPPORT FAMILIES				
CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Connect families with needed resources and services. (NY). (NAEYC)	Is aware of resources within the program and surrounding community. (NAEYC) Demonstrates beginning skills to foster family and community partnerships. (ECTC A). Provides families with community resource information. (NAEYC) (NY) (CR) (DLL)	Able to identify a limited number of community resources families may draw on to enhance their literacy and social goals. (ECTC) (NAEYC)	Collaborates and communicates with other service agencies to ensure that the children and family receives services for which they are eligible and that the services are coordinated (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.3). (NY) Builds relationship with community organizations and their representatives to bring services to child and families in the classroom. (NY)	Establishes supportive and respectful reciprocal relationships with families, assess needs of children and families, and link families appropriately with community resources to enhance health, family literacy and social goals. (ECTC B)

VI. Health, Safety and Wellness

Foundational to all other teaching practices is assuring the health, safety and wellness of young children. The key concept in this competency is that children's health is not simply the absence of illness or injury; it encompasses safety, nutrition, fitness, and physical and emotional health.

Children's safety is the first and foremost responsibility of adults who provide care for them. Safety encompasses not only the physical aspect, but also the social and emotional aspects. Most basically, teachers must be able to ensure children's safety and be prepared to handle emergencies. Teachers of young children also need to stay current on state and federal regulations and research related to children's safety and health. Finally, they should promote the sound health, dental, nutritional, and emotional stability of young children and their families, by modeling these characteristics and connecting families to culturally appropriate community health resources.

Domain: Health, Safety and Wellness

The following describes the knowledge and skills expected of early education teachers to support the health, safety and wellness of all children in the settings in which children receive early care and education services.

SUB-DOMAIN: REGULATIONS, BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS AND SAFETY PROCEDURES [IVA](ELDS)

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
State and Federal Regulations and National Health and Safety Performance Standards (NAEYC)	<p>Has knowledge and understands the purpose of and follows state and federal regulations and best practice standards including, but not limited to: (RI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of medication • Infant and child CPR and First Aid training • Fire & emergency procedures • Staffing ratios • Department of Children and Family Mandated Reporters • Communicable disease • Sudden Infant Death Syndrome • Department of Public Health • National Association for the Education of Young Children • Caring for Our Children <p>Recognizes signs of abuse and/or neglect and</p>	<p>Demonstrates knowledge of state regulations and the hierarchy between the minimal licensing requirements and national standards as the ultimate goal regarding best practices.</p> <p>Maintains organized accessible and up to date records related to the health, safety and nutrition of the children in their care (NY pg 54).</p> <p>Promptly and appropriately reports harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare to Children's Protective Services after discussion with supervisor</p>	<p>Develops and implements systems for documentation and notification of suspected child abuse and neglect, in accordance with state law.</p> <p>Obeys laws related to child abuse and the rights of children with and without disabilities (NY) (RI)</p>	<p>Anticipates and plans for potential risks to protect children, youth, and adults.</p> <p>Partners with teachers to teach age appropriate precautions and rules to children to ensure safety both indoors</p>

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	<p>understands the role of a mandated reporter to identify, document, and report suspected child abuse and neglect as mandated by law.</p> <p>Actively supervises children to ensure safety both indoors and out. (RI)</p> <p>Monitors and maintains safety in all areas, both indoors and outdoors, including the condition of equipment and materials, and the identification and removal of potential hazards (RI).</p> <p>Follows recommended guidelines to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).</p> <p>Understands ratio requirements and alerts appropriate individuals when they are not met (RI)</p>	(CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.2).		
Emergency Preparedness (NAEYC)	<p>Knows and follows safety regulations and emergency plans. (MA, pg 26) (NY)</p> <p>Routinely practices emergency and disaster drills including safety procedures for children with disabilities. (RI)</p> <p>Maintains up to date emergency contacts for each child and authorized pick up.</p>	<p>Implements procedures and emergency preparedness plans with other program staff including maintenance of emergency supplies (MA pg 26).</p> <p>Maintains a system to account for all children and staff in the event of an emergency or disaster.</p>	Develops and documents and modifies contingency plans for emergency situations and disaster drills. (MA, pg 26)	Evaluates and critiques established safety procedures and makes recommendations for change, as necessary.
Safe learning environment (NAEYC) (ECTC) (VT)	<p>Performs daily safety checklist of indoor/outdoor environment.</p> <p>Understands regulation ratio requirements and alerts appropriate individuals/administrators when they are not met.</p> <p>Recognizes potential health hazards in meals (choking, allergies, etc.) and takes steps to avoid them. (RI pg 19).</p>	Communicates information pertaining to safety standards to families and educates families of the importance of a safe home environment.		Analyzes learning environments regularly to provide a safer learning environment for children.

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	Understands that various strategies (such as face to name headcounts and positioning) help to ensure adequate supervision (NY)			
SUB-DOMAIN: REGULATIONS, BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS AND SAFETY PROCEDURES (ELDS)				
CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Healthy learning environment (VT) (NAEYC)	<p>Understands program policies and practices regarding children's health and safety status (RI pg 59) (ELDS)</p> <p>Provides a clean, safe and healthy environment (MA) (ELDS)</p> <p>Provides families with information regarding the good health routines.</p>	<p>Designs and assesses environments and procedures to protect the health of children, youth, and adults.</p> <p>Ensures adherence to health and safety regulations and policies.</p> <p>Understands impact of exposure to toxic environments.</p>	<p>Monitors the environment for healthy practices, making improvements as necessary. (ELDS)</p> <p>Engage with appropriate health professionals and consultants to ensure that classroom practices support the individual health and developmental needs of all children, including participating in the planning and implementation of IFSP and IEP goals. (ECTC B) (NAEYC)(SE)</p>	<p>Advocates for program policies and procedures that affect the health status of the school community. (ECTC A) (ECTC B) (SE) (NAEYC)</p>
Children's Health Needs (ECTC B) (NAEYC)	<p>Follows policies and procedures for infection control and universal precautions. (RI)</p> <p>Integrates optimal health routines into curriculum and routines. (NY)</p> <p>Recognizes and seeks to understand culturally influenced health practices of children. (RI pg 17)(CR)</p> <p>Understands common signs and symptoms of common childhood illness (RI) and observes children daily to check for evidence of health concerns and communicates these concerns to appropriate program staff as needed. (MA pg 24) (RI)</p> <p>Collects developmental health history from</p>	<p>Communicates with families about program policies and practices regarding health and individual health status. (RI pg 59)</p> <p>Understands individual children's allergies and other health needs and takes appropriate measures to ensure the health and safety of each child (RI pg 59)</p> <p>Provides information to families regarding communicable disease which their child has been exposed to (NY pg 59)</p> <p>Recognize physical disabilities</p>	<p>Implements procedures and collaborates with others to promote physical health and well-being.</p> <p>Considers necessary accommodations and/or modifications for physical disabilities and other health impairments (SE)</p> <p>Makes health referrals when necessary. (MA pg 23).</p>	<p>Establishes linkages and monitors system for documenting health records. (MA pg 23).</p> <p>Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory, research and policy on children's health (RI pg 17).</p> <p>Supports families in ensuring that children have access to health insurance and regular source of medical care. (MA pg 23).</p>

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	families for each child that covers topics like physical health, self-care skills, and social relationships (NY pg 61) Follows and models healthy lifestyle practices to support the health of each child. (ELDS)	and other health impairments (SE)		
Mental Health (ECTC B) (NAEYC) (FED)	Understands the importance of mental wellness and how it connects to the individual's overall health. Understands that stress and trauma have an impact on a child's development and behavior. (MA pg 25). (ELDS) Recognizes the characteristics of a healthy sense of self and the related ability of children to make appropriate choices. Understands that children are more likely to thrive when they feel physically and emotionally safe and that certain environmental factors can create stress. (NH pg 27)	Provides appropriate referral information for children and families. (MA pg 25). Recognizes behavioral symptoms of stress in children. (MA pg 25). Responds individually to the unique mental health needs of each child. (SE) Utilizes appropriate mental health services and resources.	Uses practices that support the emotional well-being of children and youth. Adapts curricula to respond to social-emotional events (MA pg 25) Identifies physical and mental signs of stress and trauma and makes appropriate referrals.	Promotes positive mental health in all aspects of program design (MA pg 25). (ELDS) Establishes a system for accessing mental health supports and works collaboratively to address concerns at the child, family and program level. (MA pg 25).

SUB-DOMAIN: REGULATIONS, BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS AND SAFETY PROCEDURES (ELDS)

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Healthy mind and body state (ECTC B) (NAEYC)	Recognizes, models and provides time and space for at least the recommended amount of active play both indoors and outdoors on a daily basis (MA pg 28; NYpg61) (ELDS) (VT) Plans and adapts age appropriate opportunities for children to be active and have adequate rest. (MA pg 28) within the daily schedule. (NY)	Recognizes the importance of a child's secure home base, and facilitates families access to applicable resources or consultation about nutrition, emergencies, diagnoses, treatments and other information (NY pg 62) Provides health screenings such as lead, and dental provider. Creates a mutually respectful	Creates a psychologically safe environment for all children and families. (NY pg 62) Communicates health, safety, wellness and nutrition information with families. (NY) Maintains a partnership with the programs health provider.	Designs program and ensures resources to provide age appropriate opportunities for all children to be active and have adequate rest, including inclusion of all children (MA pg 28)

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<p>Nutrition (NAEYC) (VT) (ECTC A)</p>	<p>Understands that the nutritional needs of infants, toddlers and preschoolers are unique to their development. (RI pg 18) (ELDS)</p> <p>Follows instructions for providing appropriate meals for children with special dietary needs (MA pg 27). (ELDS)</p> <p>Teaches and joins children for meals and snacks and models developmentally appropriate and healthy eating habits with infants, toddlers and preschoolers. (RI pg 18) (ELDS)</p>	<p>environment. (NY pg 62) (CR)</p> <p>Respectfully communicates with families regarding nutritional needs, family preferences and cultural influences on food and eating habits and uses this information to plan responsive experiences that promote nutrition and healthy eating practices. (CR) RI pg 18). (ELDS) (NY)</p> <p>Observes children during mealtime to learn about individual eating preferences and uses observations to inform menus, meal schedules, and communication with families (RI pg 18).</p> <p>Understands impact of Lack of Access to and consumption of affordable, nutritional, toxin-free foods.</p>	<p>Recognizes symptoms and behaviors of children that signal possible nutritional need or feeding/eating concerns. (RI pg 18)</p> <p>Reviews the nutrition program, making improvements as necessary.</p>	<p>Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory, research and policy on nutrition. (RI pg 18).</p> <p>Advocates for program policies and procedures that affect the nutritional welfare within the school community. (RI pg 18).</p>
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VII. Professionalism

Teachers should identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They must know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They should be committed to continuous, collaborative learning regarding their profession and to lifelong personal and professional growth. They value knowledgeable feedback, reflective input and critical perspectives on their work. They use such input to make informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources.

Early childhood educators need to understand the complex services that constitute and shape the early care and education system; their own participation as leaders; and their organizations' roles. They should be aware of larger public and private systems that shape the quality of services available to children and families. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies. They value the diversity of lifestyles, languages, beliefs, and cultural backgrounds that can be found in all aspects of our society, and advocate for policies which are free of bias and responsive to the differences in the needs of children.

Domain: Professionalism

The following describes the knowledge and skills expected of early education teachers to represent the early childhood profession. In addition, the NAEYC Code of Ethics is the foundational document by which early childhood professionals should utilize.

SUB-DOMAIN: FOUNDATIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSION (N) [VIA] (VT) (NAEYC)

CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Identifying and conducting self as part of the EC Profession	<p>Maintains active membership in professional organizations and the Connecticut Professional Development Registry (RI)</p> <p>Understands that there is a connection between the core knowledge and regulations, program policies and professional standards (RI 48).</p> <p>Understands that early childhood practice is impacted by emerging research, current issues and advances in the field (RI 48).</p> <p>Understands that the profession has a research-based core of knowledge at its foundation (RI 48)</p>	<p>Understands that the profession has a research-based core of knowledge as its foundation and utilizes this as a means of making decisions. (ECTC A)</p>	<p>Consistently seeks new information on research, current issues and advances in child development, behavior, and relationship-focused practice (CTAIMH-E, Level 1, p.5) (ECTC B)</p>	<p>Actively involved in groups or organizations engaged in research, policymaking and/or leadership (RI 48). (ECTC B)</p> <p>Intentionally serves as a resource and mentor for others in the field (NY 77).</p>

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	Understands that early care and education is an ever-evolving field based on current research and current issues (RI 48)			
Commitment to continued professional development as an Early Childhood Professional	<p>Engages in annual self evaluation process and uses information learned to influence an individualized professional development plan. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Identifies ethical and professional guidelines established by the early childhood profession (RI 48). (ECTC A)</p> <p>Upholds standards of confidentiality, sensitivity and respect for children, families, and colleagues (NY 73) (RI 49) (ECTC A)</p> <p>Recognizes areas for professional and/or personal development and participates in appropriate learning activities offered by professional organizations (RI) (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.5) (ECTC A)</p>	<p>Engages in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice (ME)</p> <p>Utilizes professional code of ethics in making professional decisions (RI 48). (ECTC B)</p> <p>Is an effective communicator with other staff and families of their understanding of families of young children and those with special needs in ways that reflect their respect for the challenges facing young families. (SE) (ECTC A)</p>	<p>Actively establishes and implements an individualized professional development plan that leads to a specific degree.</p> <p>Serves as a role model and promotes compliance with ethical standards in the workplace. (RI 48)</p> <p>Uses reflective practice throughout work with infants/young children and families to understand own emotional response to infant/family work (CTAIMH-E, Level I, p.5) (CR)</p>	<p>Articulates a personal philosophy of early childhood based on core knowledge (RI 48).</p> <p>Identifies potential conflicts of interest and ethical dilemmas and proactively seeks support in resolving emerging ethical issues. (RI 48) (ECTC B)</p> <p>Analyzes and evaluates own practice in relationship to current theory and research on child growth and development and applies new knowledge to one's practice.</p>
Ethical standards and professional guidelines (NY 73) (ECTC A) (NAEYC) (VT)	<p>Possesses a copy or has access to the National Association for the Education of Young Children Code of Ethics.</p> <p>Complies with any program requirements such as attendance, mandated reporting, professional development requirements, health and safety certifications, etc.</p> <p>Recognizes potentially unethical practices. (RI 49)</p>	Maintains professional boundaries and relationships with staff, children, and families	Uses the ethical and professional guidelines established by the early childhood profession when solving dilemmas in working with children and their families. (ECTC B)	

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Advocating for Children, Families and the Profession (NY) (NAEYC)	<p>Recognizes that national, state, and local policies and legislation affect children and families (ECTC A)</p> <p>Grounds decisions and advocacy in efforts in multiple sources of knowledge and multiple perspectives. (ECTC B)</p>	<p>Utilizes leadership qualities to improve experiences for children and families. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Advocates for all children in the classroom including those with special needs and DLL. (DLL) (SE) (ECTC B)</p>	<p>Explains current public policy issues and their impact on children, families and the profession. (ECTC B)</p> <p>Engages as an advocate for critical issues, in the early childhood professions and for the children families and communities served (ECTC B)</p>	Describe how public policies are developed, and demonstrate essential advocacy skills. (ECTC B)
SUB-DOMAIN: VALUING DIVERSITY				
CATEGORY	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2:	Level 3:	Level 4: Advanced
Diversity and cultural competence. (CR) (NAEYC)	<p>Demonstrates an understanding of and respects differences in family compositions, languages, beliefs and cultural backgrounds among children, family and colleagues. (ECTC A)</p> <p>Views diversity as an asset to the classroom and program and supports children and families enrolled in the program to recognize and appreciate diversity as an asset to the program and community.</p> <p>Understands how culture influences child-rearing practices and how that in turn can affect growth and development. (RI 49).</p>	<p>Recognizes own personal bias and how that influences perspective and work. (CR)</p> <p>Seeks out opportunities to expand his/her exposure to other cultures.</p>	<p>Plans curriculum which takes into account the diversity that exists in all aspects of society. (RI) (CR)</p> <p>Supports children in identifying and challenging bias. (RI) (CR)</p> <p>Collaborates with other educators, families, service providers, community agencies, in culturally responsive ways to meet the needs of ALL children and their families and teach and promote diversity(RI) (CEC 9) (RI) (CR)</p>	Mentors others in understanding issues related to diversity and cultural competence. (CR)

Appendix 4 (D) (1)-2 Alignment Evidence of the Connecticut CKCs to the Federal Criteria

Federal CKC Criteria	CT CKC elements that address the federal criteria with specific page references from Appendix 4 (D)(1)-1
Evidence-Based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes evidence-based research findings in child development and early care and education and related fields of study with family and professional wisdom and values. Includes evidence-based practice based on a scientific foundation, attention to contextual variables and a role for clinical judgment and expertise. Aligned with NAEYC Accreditation Criteria; NAEYC Professional Standards. <p>See page 11 for use of Bloom’s Taxonomy and pages 20-25 for coding alignment description and examples</p>
Incorporates knowledge and application of the State’s Early Learning and Development Standards, the Comprehensive Assessment Systems, child development, health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes seven content areas of professional practice Each content area represents a domain of foundational knowledge All seven domains take into consideration the needs of dual language learners and children with disabilities as well as cultural competence Addresses the skills and knowledge articulated in Connecticut’s early learning and development standards within the context of developmentally appropriate practice Application of standards implementation includes intentionally planning for and implementing early learning experiences linked to State standards <p>See pages 15-18 for description of content areas; See pages 20-50 for domains See pages 6-7 that describes our approach to addressing special populations</p>
Includes knowledge of early mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example Behavior: Strive to enhance children’s

<p>and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and literacy development in young children</p>	<p>natural interest in mathematics, literacy, and other content areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example Behavior: Cultivate their disposition to use their emerging knowledge to make sense of their physical and social worlds by providing learning experiences that address specific skills, across content areas, in meaningful and relevant contexts • Includes knowledge and skills that early childhood teachers must know and be able to do related to the understanding and practice of the need to create an intellectually engaging environment that fosters curiosity, thinking and problem-solving <p>See pages 21-29 for content area examples</p>
<p>Incorporates effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example Behavior: Use of strategies and a systematic process that informs decision-making based on multiple sources of information gathered over time. Integrating the best available evidence, practitioner expertise, and other resources with the characteristics, state expectations, needs, values and preferences of those who will be affected • Includes knowledge and skills that early childhood teachers must now and practice related to the understanding and demonstration of the foundations and principles of child observation and assessment; gathering and documenting assessment data; summarizing and interpreting assessment data; and sharing and reporting assessment data <p>See pages 15-18; See pages 35-39</p>
<p>Includes effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example Behavior: Utilizing practices, strategies, and intervention procedures that have been found to effectively prevent and address children's challenging behaviors • Includes knowledge and skills early childhood teachers must know and practice that are related to the understanding and demonstrating of the

	<p>need to manage challenging behaviors through positive interactions and relationships, develop engaging learning environments and facilitate developmentally appropriate learning experiences</p> <p>See pages 26-34</p>
Incorporates feedback from experts at the State's postsecondary institutions and other early learning and development experts and Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing and editing team included representation from institutions of higher education and other experts from a range of disciplines and settings with a broad range of expertise in early learning and development <p>See pages 3, 8-10 and 13-14</p>
Includes knowledge of protective factors and effective approaches to partnering with families and building families' knowledge, skills, and capacity to promote children's health and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes knowledge and skills early childhood teachers must know and practice related to the understanding and practice of the need to promote family and community relations and understand the impact of culture, community and family systems Example Behavior: Recognizes that there are multiple environmental influences including home language, culture, home environment, and community characteristics that affect the development and learning of children in both positive and negative ways Example Behavior: Recognizes behavioral symptoms of stress in children Example Behavior: Recognizes the importance of child's secure home base, and facilitates families' access to applicable resources or consultation about nutrition, emergencies, diagnoses, treatments and other information <p>See pages 15-18 and 40-47</p> <p>Building Family and Community Partnerships (pages 40-42) and Health, Safety and Wellness (pages 43-47)</p>

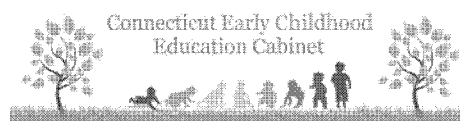


CORE KNOWLEDGE and COMPETENCIES (CKC's) ANALYSIS

FINAL REPORT

**Prepared by Peg Oliveira, Ph.D., Early Childhood Research Consultant,
on behalf of CT Charts-A-Course
for the Professional Development/Workforce Sub-Committee of the
Early Childhood Cabinet**

October 2012



Final Report WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CORE KNOWLEDGE and COMPETENCIES (CKC's) ANALYSIS

Introduction

Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC) was awarded the *Connecticut Workforce Competency Framework* proposal by the Workforce Committee of the Early Childhood Cabinet. In coordination with the State Department of Education, the charge was to review and compare Connecticut's sets of competencies associated with each credential, certificate or professional development program offered to "teachers" across all sectors serving children birth through age 8 with the nationally identified criteria associated with a Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Results from this work will inform the development of Connecticut's Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC's) for teachers of young children and will help better articulate the teacher competencies across settings so that colleges and professional development providers can prepare individuals to work in all contexts.

Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework¹(CKC) means a set of expectations that describes what Early Childhood Educators (including those working with children with disabilities and English learners) should know and be able to do.

The purpose of this project was to provide a research base for the future development of a ***Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework*** for Connecticut, informed by work on Core Knowledge and Competencies from other states, and, importantly, reflective of the foundation for this work already in implementation in Connecticut.

The Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework, at a minimum, (a) is evidence-based; (b) incorporates knowledge and application of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards, the Comprehensive Assessment Systems, child development, health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with families; (c) includes knowledge of early mathematics and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and literacy development in young children; (d) incorporates effective

¹ Core knowledge and competencies (CKCs) refers to the expectations for what the workforce should know (content) and be able to do (skills) in their role working with and/or on behalf of children and their families. These CKCs provide a foundation for professional development design (including instructional practices) and other quality improvement efforts. Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems. NAEYC 2009.

use of data to guide instruction and program improvement; (e) includes effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors; and (f) incorporates feedback from experts at the State's postsecondary institutions and other early learning and development experts and Early Childhood Educators.

For the purpose of this phase of the research, Core Knowledge and Competencies for the role of teacher, solely, was analyzed. The working definition of "early childhood teacher" developed for this purpose follows.

Definition of Early Childhood Teacher: Parents are their children's first and most influential caregivers and teachers. During the course of their early years, however, most children in Connecticut will also have their development and experiences shaped by at least one early childhood professional – someone dedicated to the well-being of young children, birth to age eight, and their families.

Connecticut has multiple sets of competencies associated with the early childhood "teacher" role across various settings. This analysis focused on examining these competencies through the lens of the federal definition of a Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

For the purposes of this analysis project, "teacher" was defined as those who have the direct care and education of young children in a wide variety of settings.

Background

The Federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant application set forth expectations and definitions for states to build the foundations for a great early childhood workforce. The baseline for this work is a Core Knowledge and Competency Framework. The RTT-ELC workforce workgroup examined Connecticut's current workforce status and documents that guide Connecticut's workforce development. The workgroup found that:

- Connecticut has multiple sets of competencies associated with the teacher role and multiple certifications and/or credentials but no single framework that describes the expectations associated with the role of the teacher.
- Connecticut has some competencies associated with other early childhood roles but not for all roles and no single framework that describes the expectations associated with each early childhood role.

These findings set the frame for the first level of work explored by the Cabinet Workforce Workgroup: to further examine the multiple sets of competencies associated with the teacher role in order to set a baseline for the next phase – developing a CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for the teacher role and eventually all other early childhood education roles.

Process

Building off the RTT-ELC workforce workgroup findings, the research team designed the following process in order to engage stakeholders across early childhood roles and sectors in the details of the work in efforts to also build momentum for designing the second phase; developing a CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

1. Identified experts.

Experts in seven competency sets representing Connecticut's base of core knowledge and competencies for early childhood teachers were identified and invited to participate in this project. The seven competency sets included:

- State Department of Education Teacher Certification PK – 3 or B – K
- State Department of Education Teacher Certification Special Education PK – 12
- Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC)
- Child Development Associate (CDA) credential
- Training Program in Child Development (TPCD)/ CCAC Core Areas of Knowledge
- Infant/Toddler Credential (for Birth to 3 system)
- Infant/Toddler Certificate (offered by Charter Oak State College)

2. Introduced experts to CKC research plan.

Identified experts attended a full day Core Knowledge and Competencies Institute on June 21, 2012. At this institute, participants were:

- Introduced to the Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency project and its goals.
- Educated on the Federal criteria in the Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.
- Trained on the “Identify and Rate Process” involving the use of a rubric for identifying and rating the presence of elements in assigned national and Connecticut certification, credential, and training program documents as compared to the integral elements of the Federal Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.
- Grouped into teams to make a plan for accomplishing identify and rate homework.

3. Experts compared their assigned competency documents to Federal Criteria.

Working in teams, participants were asked to focus on analyzing the competency documents with a common lens – the criteria in the Federal Core Knowledge and Competency Framework. Team members were asked to choose a team coordinator, and take notes on their process and results.

Expert teams gathered to review each competency set associated with the teacher role against the Federal criteria of the Core Knowledge and Competency Framework. Groups were asked to find matches, within their documents, to elements of the Federal criteria of Core Knowledge and Competencies and then to rate the strength of the match. This Identify and Rate Process provided a map of strong similarities as well as highlighted gaps between the Federal criteria associated with a Core Knowledge and Competency

Framework and national and Connecticut's current certifications, credentials, and training program documents. A report on the findings of each expert team will inform next steps in the development of a CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

4. *Coordinated unified vision and shared commitment from the inside, out.*

Participants attended a meeting on August 9, 2012, to report back their results; share insights gained from the Identify and Rate Process and offer suggestions, based on this work, for developing a CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for early childhood roles, beginning with the teacher.

5. *Organized information and suggestions.*

The research team gathered the input from the Identify and Rate Process and the contributed thoughts at the two working meetings to identify themes of importance to participants, suggestions they offered, and information on strengths and gaps in current national and Connecticut certifications, credentials, and training program documents as compared to the Federal criteria associated with a Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

6. *Reported results and support the evolving momentum and collaborative vision.*

Currently, results from the expert team work as well as previous research on the development of Core Knowledge and Competencies in other states is being synthesized and a report prepared to be presented to the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet. This report will include findings from this phase of research, as well as recommendations for an action plan and deliverables for accomplishing an informed and organic Connecticut Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Results

Themes:

Themes that emerged from the expert teams after the Identify and Rate group process included:

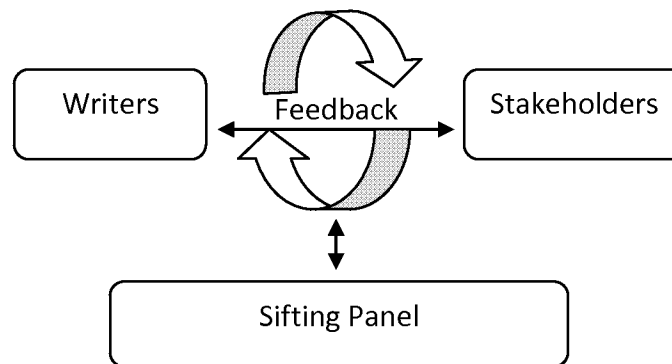
- Agreement that all documents included in this analysis should more explicitly state the criteria in the Federal Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.
- A shared sense of fragmentation between paths toward certifications and/or credentials. Suggested causes of fragmentation included different funding streams and legislation requiring different outcomes and a lack of a central governance structure to unify the parts.
- A shared desire to reconnect the fragmented pieces.
- Concern about how to measure teachers meeting Core Knowledge and Competency criteria.

- Lack of a uniform language or vocabulary across certifications and/or credentials to allow for ease in comparison to the criteria in the Federal Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Suggestions:

Suggestions offered from the expert teams after the Identify and Rate group process included:

- Develop a writing group that interfaces with stakeholders to settle on domains/categorization of standards.
- Involve a panel of stakeholders that “sifts” through information the writers gather. This sifting group should be representatives from roles that will be using or will be affected by the Core Knowledge and Competencies.



- Pay attention to breadth and depth of knowledge – using specialized standards such as those known in national sets (CEC/DEC, NAEYC, National Reading Association, etc.)
- Research and take into consideration the work of other states. Consider surrounding states and alignment across states as different roles have certifications that may cross state lines.
- Keep in mind during the process that measurement is important. We need to have a Core Knowledge and Competency Framework first before considering measurement tools, but as writing happens we should keep in mind that measurement will be needed.

Additional Criteria:

Expert teams were asked to identify criteria Connecticut should include in its Core Knowledge and Competency Framework that was missing from the Federal criteria. Suggestions included:

- Add more on application and knowledge
- Cultural Competency and Diversity
- Professionalism and Ethics
- Community Relations
- Family Engagement – especially in the area of building relationships with families
- Parent Education

- Self-understanding: Criteria around how one acknowledges their consciousness; that is an awareness of their values and beliefs and how their lens effects their decisions about teaching – intentionality.
- Differentiated Instruction
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Expand content areas to include the following: science, social studies, approaches to learning, personal/social, creative & aesthetic, dual language learning.

Patterns of strength and variability:

Results of the Identify and Rate Process illuminated a pattern of overall strengths as well as wide variability across competency sets with some of the criteria in the Federal Core Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Across all competency sets reviewed against the Federal criteria, there was consistent strength in the following criteria:

- Incorporates knowledge and application of child development.
- Incorporates knowledge and application of health. However, despite high ranks, mental health and language specific to children with disabilities were repeatedly mentioned as areas in need of strengthening.

Across all competency sets reviewed against the Federal criteria, there was consistent weakness in the following criteria:

- Incorporates knowledge and application of the State's early learning and development standards.
 - Only one set was considered to have strong evidence of this criteria.
- Incorporates knowledge and application of culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with families.
 - Comments suggested language emphasized classrooms rather than families and noted a lack in specific reference to non-traditional families (same sex, grandparent, foster, single parent, etc).
- Includes knowledge of early mathematics and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and literacy development in young children.
 - Only one certification was rated as high on this criterion; others all received very low ratings.
- Incorporates effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement.
 - Again, only one certification was rated as high on this criterion; others all received very low ratings.

Across all competency sets reviewed against the Federal criteria, there was great variability in strength of match in the following criteria:

- Incorporates knowledge and application of the comprehensive assessment systems.

- While half of the expert teams rated their competency set as strong in this criterion the other half rated their competency set as extremely weak, citing the need for more explicit language.
- Incorporates feedback from experts at the State's postsecondary institutions and other early learning and development experts and Early Childhood Educators.
 - Again, half of the expert teams rated their competency set as having this evidence, while the other half rated their competency set lacking this evidence.
- Includes effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors.
 - No pattern emerged.
- The competencies reviewed are evidence based.
 - No pattern emerged.

Recommendations

The research team designed and facilitated the process for the first phase in developing a Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework. Results indicate the desire to further explore the current fragmentation between certifications and credentials resulting in a Connecticut CKC Framework that aligns with the Federal criteria but also expands the depth and breadth of that criteria to accurately reflect the Connecticut early childhood population and contexts.

The Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet approved funds to take the next steps toward developing a Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework utilizing the results from this initial research project, reviews of other State CKC Frameworks, and engagement in national learning opportunities such as webinars, learning tables, and national experts.

The following steps toward developing a Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework over the next 2 years were approved by the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet:

- Contract with a facilitator to engage cross-agency and cross early childhood sector engagement in team process work.
- Select a writing panel, review panel, and stakeholder committee that would interact with each other in a feedback loop process. The writing panel would consist of individuals trained in standards writing.
- Conduct a job analysis of the penultimate Core Knowledge and Competency draft. This is a survey to the field asking for responses to questions about the content, functionality, purpose, and structure of the document. Results from the survey will be considered by a sub-set of the writing panel, review panel, and stakeholder committee.
- Print and disseminate the Core Knowledge and Competency document using technology structures to multiple stakeholder and sectors in conjunction with informational seminars on the uses of the document.

- Continue discussions with agencies and stakeholders addressing coordination of in-service and pre-service delivery using competency-based foundations.

A Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework will provide higher education institutions, in-service professional development providers, coaches, consultants, and others who provide professional learning experiences for early childhood educators a common foundation to build those experiences for educators across multiple sectors. Certifications and credentials identified as needed for specific roles will first use the Core Knowledge and Competency as the competency-based foundation and add competencies associated with the unique skills needed to fulfill specific roles, such as special educator, interventionist, home visitor, etc.

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Connecticut's Early Childhood Career Ladder

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 9	Level 10	Level 11	Level 12	Level 13	Level 14	Level 15
CCAC Member	Module I (30 Hours)	Modules I (30 Hours) and Module II (45 Hours) = 75 Hours or 3 ECE Credits	Modules I (30 Hours) and Module II (45 Hours) and Module III (45 Hours) = 120 Hours	Modules I (30 Hours) and Module II (45 Hours) and Module III (45 Hours) and Module IV (30 Hours) = 150 Hours or 6 ECE Credits	CDA or 12 ECE Credits	CDA and 12 ECE credits	30 ECE Credits or 1Year ECE Certificate	Associates Degree including 12 ECE Credits	Associates Degree in ECE or School Age	Bachelors Degree including 12 ECE Credits	Bachelors Degree in ECE or School Age	Masters Degree including 12 ECE Credits	Masters Degree in ECE or School Age	Advance Degree including 12 ECE Credits

DEFINITION OF CAREER LADDER TERMINOLOGY

ECE =Early Childhood Education; ASE = After School Education (School-Age/Youth Care)

All coursework and degrees must be from a regionally accredited college, university or institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher Education.

♦ Early Childhood Education majors include Early Childhood Education, Child Studies, Child Development, Human Development and Family Relations, Elementary Education, Special Education or Home Economics/Child Development.

♦ ♦ After School Education applies **ONLY** to After School Education professionals. As defined by the National After School Association (NAA), After School Education majors include Early Childhood Education, Special Education, Youth Studies, Child Development, Recreation, Family Social Sciences and Elementary Education.

♣ Modules must be taken in sequential order, meaning you have to take Module I before taking Module II, etc.

▲ CDA requirements: In addition to completing 120 clock hours of training, CDA candidates have to: Be 18 years of age or older; Hold a High School diploma or equivalent; 480 hours experience working with children (within last 5 years); First Aid Certificate; Professional Resource File; Parent Opinion Questionnaire; CDA Assessment Observation Instrument; Pass CDA Assessment Test

Community Partners for Early Literacy

In August 2008, Eastern's Center for Early Childhood Education was awarded a three-year, \$3.9 million Early Reading First grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Under the Community Partners for Early Literacy (CPLE) project, the Center partnered with the Windham Public Schools' Early Childhood Center and with Eastern's Child and Family Development Resource Center. Over a three-year period, the project improved the language and literacy skills of nearly 600 preschool-aged children and improved their early literacy instruction by providing professional development to their teachers and paraprofessionals. Below are some of the project's major accomplishments.



Increased the Knowledge and Skills of Preschool Teachers and Paraprofessionals

CPLE provided ongoing, for-credit professional development to over 40 preschool teachers, assistant teachers, special education staff, and paraprofessionals in oral language, phonological awareness, vocabulary, early writing, and other topics related to language development and early literacy. Highlights of these efforts include:

- Provided 158 professional development sessions to teachers and paraprofessionals, totaling over 440 hours.
- Provided 37 professional development sessions in Spanish for Spanish-speaking paraprofessionals.
- Awarded 157 college credits to participating teachers/special educators and 189 credits to paraprofessionals who successfully completed course requirements.
- Provided nearly 4,000 hours of weekly, in-classroom coaching from highly qualified literacy coaches to teachers and paraprofessionals.

Making Gains: Literacy Knowledge

- Teachers improved their literacy knowledge by an average of 15% over the course of the project.
- Paraprofessionals improved their literacy knowledge by an average of 20% over the course of the project.

Making Gains: Classroom Literacy Environment

- At the beginning of the project, NO classrooms were rated as “strong” overall on the ELLCO (Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool).
- After 3 years, 60% of classrooms were rated as “strong” overall on the ELLCO.
- ELLCO scores improved by an average of 24 points over the course of the project.

Making Gains: Quality of Book Reading

- By the project's third year, 92% of the classrooms were rated as “strong” or better on quality of book reading on the ELLCO, and 62% were rated as “exemplary.”

Improved the Home Literacy Environment

CPLE enhanced literacy activities in children's homes by engaging their families in a comprehensive family literacy program. Highlights of these efforts include:

- Hosted 14 family literacy events for parents and grandparents that featured demonstrations and hands-on practice in dialogic reading, rhyming games, and other activities.
- Distributed 6,000 books to children to build their home libraries.
- Sent home literacy lending kits each week to encourage reading at home.

Improved Children's Language and Early Literacy Skills

CPEL utilized a variety of screening and assessment tools to monitor children's progress and track changes in instructional strategies and classroom environments. Project staff conducted 3,683 early childhood assessments using the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)*, the *Expressive Vocabulary Test (EVT)*, and several subtasks of the *Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) PreK*. Assessment results show marked improvement in children's early literacy performance during the project. Highlights of children's gains include:

Making Gains: Receptive Vocabulary

- Each spring the average PPVT score was above the target score of 85. Children's average spring score increased by 4 points over the three years of the grant.

Average spring score:

Year 1: 89.70

Year 2: 90.92

Year 3: 93.71

- The average gain in children's receptive vocabulary from fall to spring was 6.89 standard score points in the third year of the grant. Spanish-speaking children made the greatest gains.

Making Gains: Rhyming

- By the project's third year, the average gain in rhyme awareness for Spanish-speaking 4-year-olds was 30% from fall to spring.

Involved Eastern Students in Important Experiential Learning Experiences

CPEL employed 34 Eastern undergraduate and graduate students from eight majors. The students worked as early literacy assessors, classroom substitutes, and literacy kit managers, and were a critical element in the project's success. "The Eastern students who worked for us learned how to work as professionals; they gained real-world experience that they often can apply to their university coursework," said CPEL project manager William Black. "Several Eastern students have mentioned that their CPEL job has given them insight into themselves, made them more confident, opened their eyes to the education profession and helped them see how early childhood education and psychology theories apply to the development of young children."

Project Staff

Dr. Ann Anderberg and Dr. Maureen Ruby, Co-Principal Investigators

Julia DeLapp, Project Director

William Black, Project Manager

Audrey Cadarette, Literacy Coach

Sandra Granchelli, Literacy Coach

Emden Jimenez-Sifontes, Literacy Coach

Janet Johnson, Literacy Coach

Greg Hartzell, Videographer

Kerin Jaros-Dressler, Videographer

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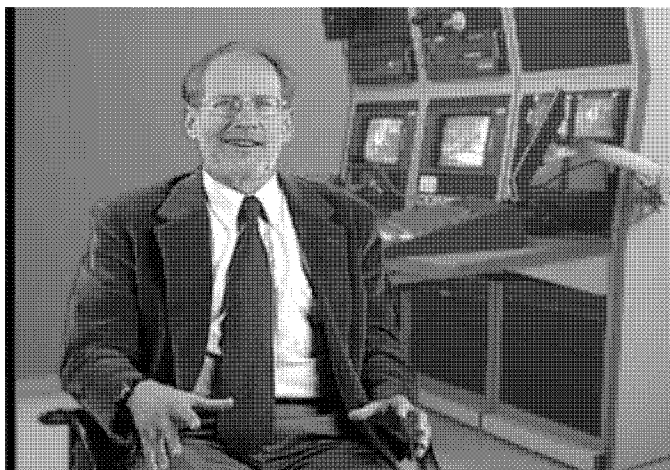


Educational Video Clips for Early Childhood Professionals

www.easternct.edu/cece/e-clips_main.html

The Center for Early Childhood Education's e-clips project is an effort to provide early childhood professionals with tips and ideas they can implement in their own classrooms. e-clips are brief professional development videos that teachers and child care providers can access for free from the Center's website or YouTube channel, or download from iTunesU.

Each e-clip features one or more experts describing how early childhood professionals can use the latest research to enhance children's learning. Interviews with classroom teachers and footage from preschool classrooms illustrate how educators can put theory into practice and capture authentic early childhood classroom experiences. Supplementing each e-clip are suggested readings, additional on-line resources, and discussion questions to support conversations within instructional teams, in staff meetings, or in college courses.



How to Use e-clips

While many early childhood professionals will view and reflect on ideas presented in e-clips independently, the Center encourages educators to view e-clips in a group setting, such as in a staff meeting or during classroom planning periods. The video clips are designed to support educators in reflecting on their current teaching practices and in imagining possible changes they can make in their classrooms to implement research-based strategies. We also encourage teacher educators to use e-clips in their college classes.

Available Topics

- e-clip #1: Five Predictors of Early Literacy with Dr. Theresa Bouley
- e-clip #2: Introducing Technology to Young Children with Dr. Doug Clements and Dr. Sudha Swaminathan
- e-clip #3: Involving Parents with Jamie Klein
- e-clip #4: The Importance of Play with Dr. Jeffrey Trawick-Smith
- e-clip #5: Observing Young Children with Dr. Sudha Swaminathan
- e-clip #6: *Supporting the Individual Child's Needs* with Dr. Ann Gruenberg and Niloufar Rezai
- e-clip #7: Encouraging Physical Activity in Preschoolers with Dr. Darren Robert
- e-clip #8: Supporting English Language Learners with Dr. Ann Anderberg
- e-clip #9: Using Math Talk with Preschoolers to Support Learning with Dr. Jeffrey Trawick-Smith and Dr. Sudha Swaminathan

For More Information

The e-clips project is a collaboration of early childhood faculty, video production professionals, communication students, and Eastern's Child and Family Development Resource Center, including the following individuals:

Executive Producer: Julia DeLapp

Producer/Director: Denise Matthews

Production Coordinator: Ken Measimer

For more information, contact Julia Delapp at 860/465-0687 or delappj@easternct.edu.

To receive notification each time a new e-clip is released, send an email to cece@easternct.edu, or Like! us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EasternCECE.

**Early Childhood College Program Approval Processes Leading to
an Early Childhood Teacher Credential**

March 2012

**Developed by:
The Early Childhood Education Standards and Program Approval Program
Committee and Sub-Committees**

The Connecticut Early Childhood Teacher Credential (CT ECTC) process was designed to prepare the workforce in accordance with the requirements outlined in legislation (PA 11-54). The following is the result of the 2008 Connecticut Early Childhood Education Standards and Program Approval Committee and additional deliberations by subsequent representative committees. The processes and procedures were developed for awarding the CT ECTC at an Associate Degree level (Level A, Infant/Toddler and/or Preschool ECTC) and a Bachelor Degree level (Level B, Infant/Toddler and/or Preschool ECTC) through two routes: graduation from an approved higher education program or individual competency review. Individuals may apply for both endorsements at either level if the institution provided the appropriate coursework and field experiences required for each age group as described later in this document.

Process for Approving Programs

Program Approval

Institutions of higher education will respond to the program recommendations for two-year and four-year programs (see Articulation Recommendations beginning on page 5) approved by the Committee. Each institution may have variations to their designed program but must demonstrate that all the competencies are met by the time the student completes the program and earns a degree. In addition, all Associate Degree programs must be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Each program will be reviewed under a process developed by the CT SDE in conjunction with the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs. To begin the process, programs submit the information outlined below to the CT State Department of Education (CT SDE):

- General Education courses;
- Oral language skills (covered in a course or courses taken by the student). This should be expressed as a set of communication competences;
- ECE courses (including prerequisite and/or co-requisite courses);
- Field work descriptions;
- Key assessments linked to student competency development; and
- Practicum description including the method of assessment of practicum performance.

The CT ECTC Standards are the basis for the development and approval of programs leading to the ECTC at all colleges and universities. The Standards were constructed from the NAEYC teacher preparation standards that outline the competencies students should develop during their college experience. An application for program approval can be obtained through the CT SDE which includes instructions for matrix development that identify which courses address each competency and how the competency is assessed. Each institution will have a process for advising and tracking student progress and program completion and shall designate a contact person responsible for tracking student progress.

Application reviews and technical assistance are provided and once approved, the program is granted approval for seven years.

Practicum Requirements for CT ECTC Program Approval

The Practicum is a key component of both two-year and four-year programs. Therefore, practicum experiences are required at both the associate and bachelor's degree levels. The goal is that culminating practicum experiences will be both consistent and of high quality, as well as provide a way for those working in the field and studying part-time to complete a meaningful practicum experience.

Key Definitions

"Fieldwork" means observations and on-site experiences in early childhood program settings to gain real-life experience and knowledge.

"Student Practicum" means a supervised classroom experience in an approved early childhood program setting, structured to provide opportunities to meet the CT ECTC competencies.

Associate Degree Practicum Requirements

Prerequisite to Practicum

- Students must have taken all required courses and all required competencies must be met prior to the culminating practicum.
- Students must have demonstrated competency on Key Assessments (other than those associated with the practicum) prior to the practicum experience.

These competencies are in the areas of:

- Child development and learning (including early language and literacy)
- Family and community relationships
- Observing, documenting, & assessing to support young children and families
- Teaching & learning
- Becoming a professional

(Level A competencies identified in the CT ECTC Standards document)

Hours Required

- 100 hours of fieldwork prior to the practicum
- 200 hours for a culminating practicum

Age Groupings Possible

- Infant and/or toddler
- Preschool through kindergarten

Placements

Listings of approved programs by categories listed below can be obtained from the CT SDE.

- NAEYC center-based accredited programs
- Head Start center-based approved programs
- Kindergarten - NAEYC accredited programs

- Kindergarten - CAIS approved programs
- Other sites where the institution requests approval from the CT State Department of Education

Bachelor's Degree Practicum Requirements

Prerequisite to Practicum

- Students must have taken all required courses and all required competencies must be met prior to the culminating practicum.
- Students must have demonstrated competency on Key Assessments (other than those associated with the practicum) prior to the practicum experience.

These competencies are in the areas of:

- Child development and learning (including early language and literacy)
- Family and community relationships
- Observing, documenting, & assessing to support young children and families
- Teaching & learning
- Becoming a professional

(Level B competencies identified in the CT ECTC Standards document)

Hours Required

- For transfer students with the Level A Credential, only one additional practicum experience is required. The additional culminating student teaching practicum at the four-year institution will require a minimum of 200 hours.
- For the four-year degree student with no transfer degree in ECE and no Level A Credential, two practicum experiences are needed. The first experience requires a minimum of 200 total hours. The second experience will also require a minimum of 200 hours.
- Field experience will be included as part of course requirements and will be instituted as appropriate to each approved program.

Age Groupings Possible

- Infant and/or toddler
- Preschool through kindergarten

Placements

Listings of approved programs by categories listed below can be obtained from the CT SDE.

- NAEYC center-based accredited programs
- Head Start center-based approved programs
- Kindergarten- NAEYC accredited programs
- Kindergarten - CAIS approved programs
- Other sites where college requests approval from the CT State Department of Education

Additional Implementation Considerations for Practicum Experiences at the Students' Worksite

An examination of workforce data, as well as data on graduates from Connecticut's early childhood programs, indicate that many students are employed in an early childhood setting while completing a degree. These students depend on their income to support their families. Therefore, the Committee examined models in other states that allow students to continue employment while completing a practicum. Based on this review, the Committee recommends that students be allowed to complete the practicum experience at their worksite if the following conditions are met:

- The site meets the placement criteria.
- The student must be placed in a classroom or site that is different from their primary employment assignment.
- An external mentor, who will make program/classroom visits, needs to be included in the supervision process.
 - External mentors are individuals who are not associated with the practicum site but may be associated with the college, such as adjunct faculty.
 - External mentors may also be coaches and consultants currently working in the field and are familiar with the CT ECTC competencies.
 - External mentors will be hired by the college or university utilizing them for this special circumstance supervision and must be given specific training that allows them to support student learning free from employment stressors.
 - The external mentor will help to ensure objectivity during the practicum experience since the person with whom the student teaches or for whom the student works will not be the individual doing the supervision and student evaluation of competency associated with the practicum.

To further support student learning at the worksite, consider enrollment in a section of the practicum course with other students completing the practicum at their worksites. Additional funding will be needed to hire and train external mentors and might be acquired through student fees, state funding or a combination of these funding mechanisms.

CT ECTC Program Articulation for Students Transferring from a Two-Year Institution to a Four-Year Institution

A goal of the Committee was to create an Articulation Plan for a smooth transfer of credits and practicum experience(s) from a two-year approved early childhood program to a four-year approved early childhood program. Transfer students should not lose credits or be required to earn more credits to complete a degree than students who start at the four-year institution as freshmen. The recommendations from the Committee to accomplish this goal are as follows:

Associate Degree CT ECTC – Level A
Minimum of 60 Credits

Core ECE Courses - 21 credits

Introduction to Early Childhood Education (3)
 Observation Participation Seminar (3)
 Exceptional Learner (3)
 Early Language and Literacy (3)
 Child Development (3)
 Student Teaching Practicum (6 credits)

CT ECTC Competency Areas to be addressed in other courses or as a separate course:

Health, Safety, Nutrition (ECTC Standards 1b, 1c, 4e)
 Facilitating Social and Emotional Development/Classroom Management (ECTC Standard 4b)
 Child, Family and School (ECTC Standards 2a, 2b, 2c)

Additional ECE elective credits: 9 credits in courses above or other electives

Total: 30 ECE credits

Core General Education: 18-19 of 30 Credits

Composition (6) - 3 credits may be in an appropriate writing intensive course
 Human Communication (Speech) (3)
 General Psychology (3)
 Science (3-4)
 Math (3)

Remaining General Education Credits:

The college should include other courses needed to meet institution and/or State General Education requirements, such as those under consideration in the Board of Regents Transfer Policy. United States History and the appropriate math sequence are suggested for students who may later decide to continue in a teacher certification program.

For the ECTC with an Infant/Toddler Endorsement:

I/T Growth and Development and Methods and Techniques for Infants and Toddlers would be required along with I/T experiences in other courses including the Student Teaching Practicum.

Other Requirements for Two-Year Program Approval and Articulation

- NAEYC accreditation.
- Established prerequisites and appropriate sequencing of courses.
- Prerequisite for Introduction to ECE: Student will be ready to take the last developmental English course.
- Core ECE and General Education courses and the majority of ECE electives should be taken prior to the student teaching practicum.

Bachelor Degree CT ECTC – Level B Minimum of 120 Credits

Transfer to a Bachelor Degree ECE Program (reviewed as part of the four-year institution approval process)

- Twenty-four ECE credits should become part of the major at the upper division institution where a student transfers.
- The remaining ECE credits are to be transferred as ECE electives at the upper division institution.
- If a four-year institution has a major that is less than 48 credits, then half of the courses in the major should be transferred from the two-year institution and the remaining two-year institution courses should become ECE electives.

Additional Coursework in Major

- ECE coursework at the upper division institution will provide more advanced knowledge and connections to research in the field – with emphasis on theories and models, and reflective practice.
- The program will prepare students to meet State CT ECTC Level B Competencies (unless starting as a freshman then Level A and Level B competencies must be addressed).
- All programs must have upper division Student Teaching Practicum.
- Content areas for consideration:
 - Curriculum Design and Development/ Integrated Curriculum Methods and Materials
 - Assessment and Individualization/Inclusive ECE
 - Family Theories/Sociology of the Family
 - Literacy/Children’s Literature
 - Cross Cultural Perspectives/Diversity/Racial and Cultural Identities
 - Social, Emotional and Moral Development and Learning
 - Program Analysis
 - ECE Policy and Professionalism
 - Suggested elective:
 - Administration and Supervision of ECE programs

The upper division portion of the major should allow the student to earn additional credits in ECE or from Liberal Arts & Sciences and meet the institutional credit requirement for the degree. It is suggested that consideration be given to having the student construct a major that will be acceptable to a teacher certification program should the student eventually decide to enroll in the Alternate Route to Certification program or a traditional program.

Distinguishing the ECTC Endorsements

The ECTC endorsement area is defined by the Observation and Practicum courses taken. A student can earn both an Infant/Toddler and Preschool endorsement if the coursework taken does the following:

- Prepares a student with knowledge and understanding of Infants/Toddlers through experiences specific to this age group; and
- Prepares a student with knowledge and understanding of Preschoolers through experience specific to this age group.

If coursework is most specific to one age group then the student qualifies for the endorsement only associated with that age group.

Application for the CT ECTC

Student Applicant through an Approved Institution Pathway

The application for the credential will be available in electronic format. Institutions will assist the student with registering in the CT Professional Registry. A transcript indicating graduation from the approved program must be submitted along with the application and verification from the institution indicating completion of the program and that the student has demonstrated the competencies associated with either the Infant/Toddler and/or the Preschool ECTC. Students can apply for both endorsements if all the requirements for each age group are met. Once the application and verification are complete, the student can obtain the ECTC document indicating their endorsement(s) directly from the CT Professional Registry website.

Individual Review Pathway

Another goal of the Committee was to provide a pathway where individuals of the current workforce with college degrees and students from non-approved institutions could be awarded a CT ECTC to ensure there would not be a workforce shortage in 2015 when new legislative requirements go into effect. In addition, this goal enables teachers to earn a CT ECTC to enhance their career mobility. The Committee also addressed and made recommendations regarding a future Pathway through which those individuals with college degrees in other disciplines could earn a CT ECTC.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a CT ECTC a teacher must:

- hold an associate or bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child development, child studies, human development or an early education concentration that is accredited by the Board of Governors for Higher Education and regionally accredited (in-state or out-of-state institutions) and have graduated prior to the approval of the ECTC by the Department of Education, the Board of Regents, and the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs and have three years of full-time experience, or 3240 hours of part-time experience (equivalent to three years full-time), met within the past five years; **or**
- the teacher has an associate degree or bachelor's degree in another field from a college that is accredited by the Board of Governors for Higher Education and is regionally

accredited (in-state or out-of-state institutions) and has earned 12 credits in Early Childhood Education in accordance with state policy and the approved list of courses (Infant/Toddler or Pre-k) and have three years of full-time experience, or 3240 hours of part-time experience (equivalent to three years full-time), met within the past five years;
or

- be a recent graduate (3-5 years) from an out- of- state or out- of- country college or university and not yet employed.

The endorsement level will depend on the coursework contained in the degree or the content of other credits taken and the age level of the students in the teacher's work experience.

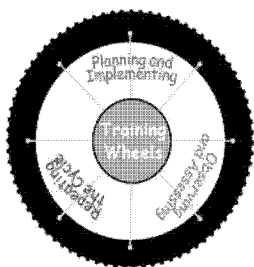
Process

1. A teacher who has a degree in the field and meets the experience criteria will complete an application for the credential and provide evidence of education and work experience to Charter Oak State College. Charter Oak State College will review the applicant's work submitted in a portfolio format in alignment with the ECTC standards and determine if the applicant needs further development in specific areas. If the applicant needs professional development, a menu of choices will be provided to the applicant. The teacher will receive a Level A (associate) or Level B (bachelor's) Credential for pre-k and/or infant/toddler based on the Charter Oak State College review process after the applicant completes continued professional development. If the applicant needs no further professional development after the review, the appropriate credential will be awarded.
2. A teacher with a degree in another field who meets the experience criteria will complete an application and follow that same process with Charter Oak State College as outlined above. After reviews are complete and any necessary professional development is complete, the applicant would receive a Level A or Level B Credential depending on the level of the degree the teacher has previously earned.
3. A teacher with any degree but no experience in the field shall follow the processes outlined above. In addition, this teacher may be expected to complete appropriate practicum experiences.
4. A graduate from a Connecticut college recently approved to offer the ECTC program who earned a degree in the field prior to the college approval date may earn the credential by submitting a portfolio, in an approved format, demonstrating all of the required competencies. The credential will be Level A or Level B based on the degree received.

Out-of-Country Candidates with a Degree in the Field

Applicants will need to demonstrate the expected level of literacy (oral and written) and have course work with content that provided the applicant with the knowledge and experiences to meet Connecticut's ECTC competencies. Out-of-country applicants, from non-English speaking countries, must provide transcript translations. All candidates from out-of-the-country will submit their transcripts to Charter Oak State College for review.

When course content is uncertain, candidates may be asked to provide course descriptions and/or course syllabi. Additional coursework may be required to meet Connecticut ECTC competencies.



Training Wheels: The Cycle of Intentional Teaching Using Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Project Evaluation

Project Description

Training Wheels is an intensive professional development project designed to enhance teaching by providing high-quality training and on-site coaching to preschool program staff. A combination of training and coaching supports participants as they engage in the cycle of intentional teaching using Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks.

Teachers involved in this project plan and implement learning experiences that address specific state learning standards, and observe and document student progress related to specific benchmarks aligned to the standards. Based upon data gathered, teachers modify curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of their classroom as a whole, as well as the needs of individual children. Three trainings throughout the year provide teachers with experiences and strategies for implementing this work in their program. Throughout this process, coaches engage teachers in goal setting, provide feedback, and promote reflection as a means for increasing knowledge and improvements in practice. The project provides 5 ½ days of onsite coaching to teachers during the first year, interspersed between training sessions. An additional 4 days of coaching is offered during a second year of participation.

Training Wheels project objectives include:

- To improve teachers' understanding of and ability to use the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks;
- To improve teachers' understanding of and ability to use early learning standards, assessment information and children's interests to inform curriculum and instruction;
- To improve teachers' ability to individualize instruction for all children.

Training Wheels has been offered to teams of educators from preschool programs across the state during each of the past 5 school years, beginning in the Spring of 2008. Each team consists of 2-4 staff members from a program and must include the head teacher from any participating classroom. Figure 1 shows the number of participating program teams for each of the 5 project years.

Figure 1: Programs teams participating in *Training Wheels* for each year of implementation

Project Year	Year 1 Program Teams (receiving 3 days of training and 5 ½ day coaching)	Year 2 Program Teams (receiving 4 days of coaching)
Spring 2008	43 (Cohort 1)	n/a
Fall 2008-Spring 2009	38 (Cohort 2)	33 (Cohort 1)
Fall 2009-Spring 2010	n/a	32 (Cohort 2)
Fall 2010-Spring 2011	30 (Cohort 3)	n/a
Fall 2011-Spring 2012	26 (Cohort 4)	20 (Cohort 3)

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Evaluation Methods and Subjects

During the 2010-2011 school year, an outside evaluator from The Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CCESC) at EDUCATION CONNECTION, conducted a project evaluation to determine the effectiveness of this professional development project. Data collection methods included: (1) qualitative focus group interviews with teachers, (2) aligned pre-post measures completed by both teachers and coaches and (3) end-of-project surveys. Pre and Post measures completed by teachers examined both their understanding and their use of the cycle of intentional teaching. Coach's ratings of participants' use of the cycle of intentional teaching were based upon classroom observations and documented evidence, such as lesson plans.

Data was collected across all measures for teachers participating in the third cohort of programs in the fall 2010 through spring 2011, with an additional sample of teachers from the first and second cohorts participating in the focus group interviews and completing end-of-project surveys. Statistical analyses were conducted to determine the significance of the results. A detailed description of the evaluation, statistical analyses and results are available in the full *Training Wheels* evaluation report (see ____ (attach link or reference)).

Evaluation Results

Results indicate that *Training Wheels* has a significant positive impact on preschool teachers' understanding of and use of the cycle of intentional teaching. Teacher Self-Assessment pre and post results demonstrate an increase in teachers' understanding of and ability to use four components of the cycle of intentional teaching: planning, implementing, observing and documenting, and assessing. For all of the 17 items related to the frequency of behaviors linked to the cycle of intentional teaching, paired post-test results were statistically higher than pre-test results (see Figure 2). This indicates an increased use of each component of the cycle of intentional teaching over time. Similarly, post-assessment results were higher than pre-assessment results for all of the 12 items related to understanding of the cycle of intentional teaching.

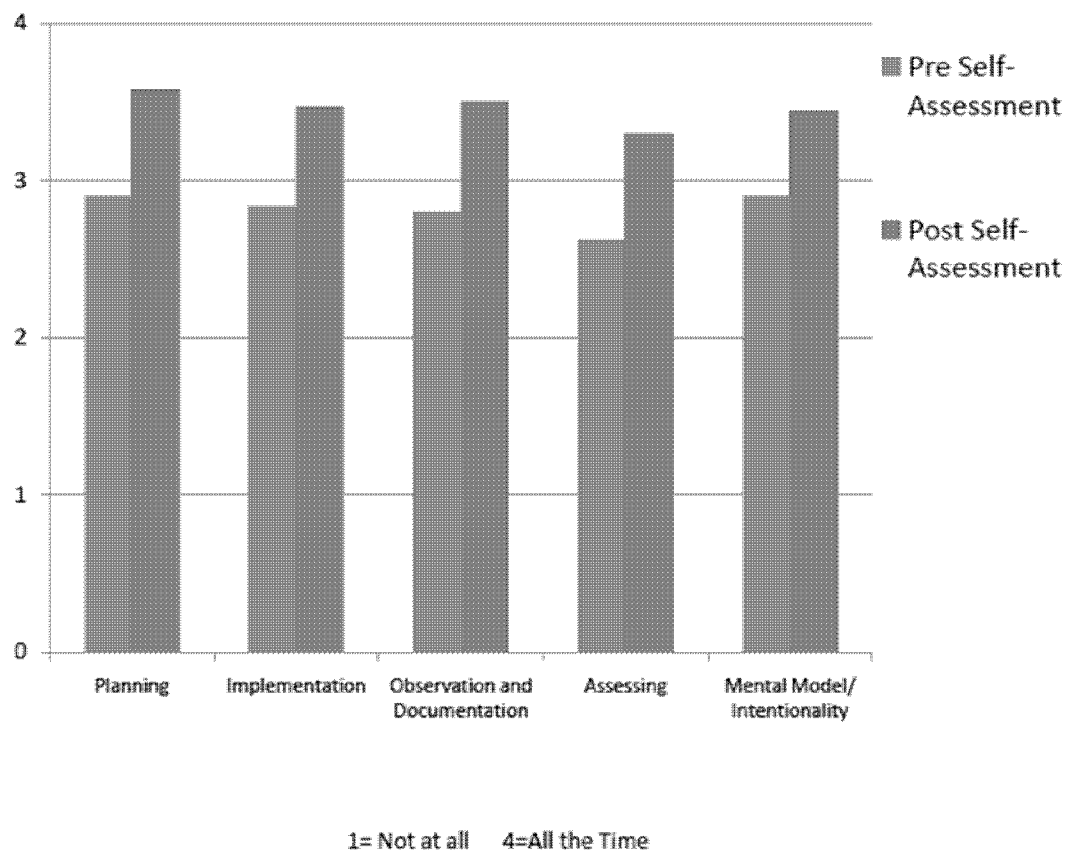
Results from the Coach's Observation of Teaching Behaviors support results of the Teacher's Self-Assessment with significant improvement observed for all of the 17 items linked to the use of the cycle of intentional teaching between the first and last observations (See Figure 3).

Focus group participants from previous cohorts involved in this initiative also describe *Training Wheels* as increasing their understanding of and ability to use the cycle of intentional teaching including each of the four components of planning, implementing, observing and documenting, and assessing. Focus group participants also reported on the significance of a second year of coaching. Additional data related to the impact of a second year of coaching will be collected in the 2011-2012 school year.

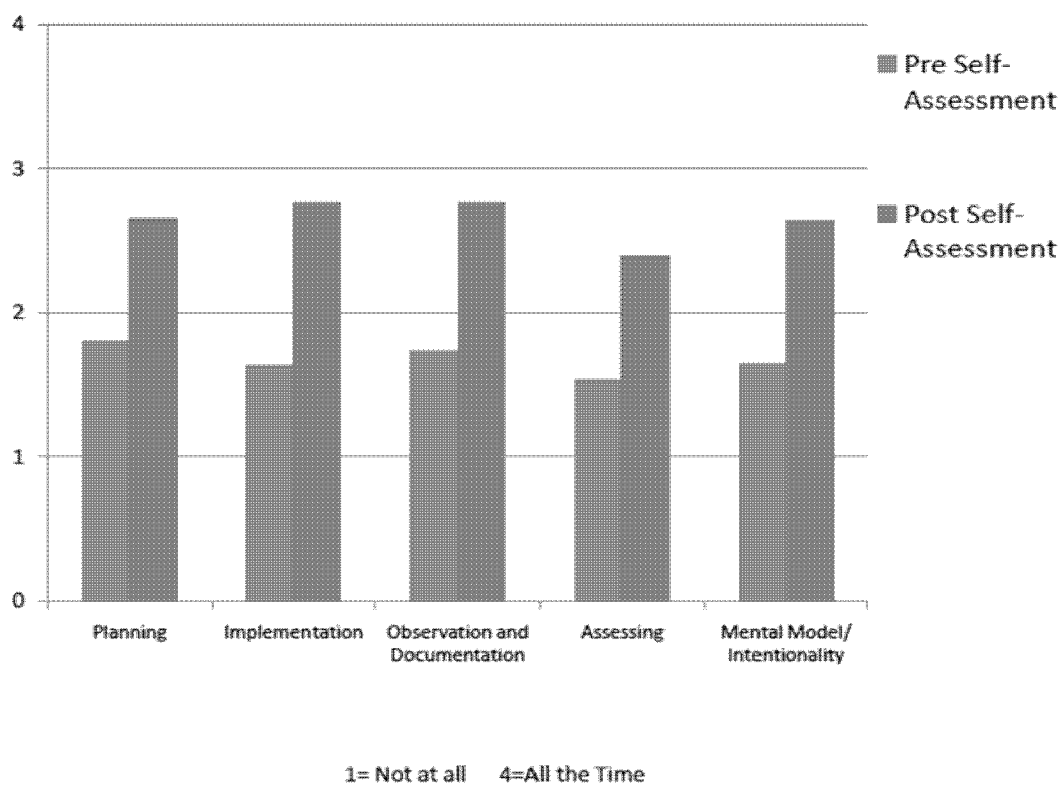
Conclusions

Training Wheels is a highly successful project that significantly impacts teacher knowledge and practice. This impact was documented through multiple measures, including teacher self evaluation, coach observations, and focus groups. Continued documentation is needed relative to the impact of a second year of coaching and the potential role of administrators in supporting teacher progress.

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Figure 2: Teacher Self-Assessment of the Frequency of Use of the Components of the Cycle of Intentional Teaching

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Figure 3: Coach's Observation of Evidence of Participant's Use of the Cycle of Intentional Teaching



Training Wheels: The Cycle of Intentional Teaching 2011 Evaluation Report

Introduction

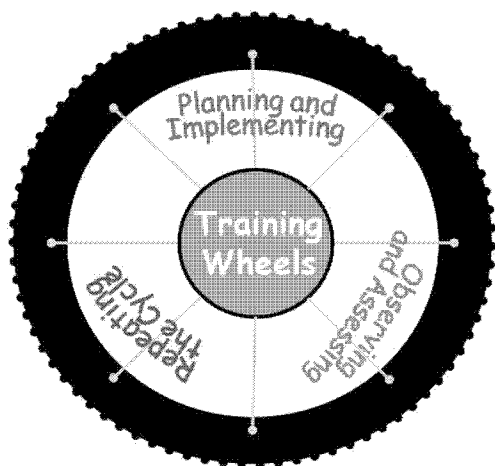
The Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CCESC) at EDUCATION CONNECTION submits this report to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to facilitate the completion of an evaluation process to assess the implementation of Training Wheels in a limited number of qualified Connecticut preschool programs.

To support the CSDE's Training Wheels evaluation process, Dr. Mhora Lorentson, Director of the Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CCESC) at EDUCATION CONNECTION, was contracted to develop, update and revise data collection instruments, initiate qualitative data collection efforts, analyze data collected and prepare this report for submission to the CSDE. Overall evaluation activities were designed to provide insight into the effectiveness of project activities and achievement of goals and objectives; to encourage the adaptation of practice based on data to enhance project effectiveness; to assess the relationship between project activities and teacher performance; to collect data to inform the CSDE reporting and communication requirements; and to identify the factors impacting the success of strategies used to assist teachers to incorporate the cycle of intentional teaching techniques in CT preschool programs.

Data summarized in this report was collected during the 2010-2011 academic year from the third cohort of program participants. This is the only cohort for which complete data collection occurred. Focus group and end-of-year survey data was collected from cohorts I and II and is summarized as appropriate within this report.

Training Wheels

Training Wheels was designed to support Connecticut preschool programs to implement the cycle of intentional teaching. It is expected that the implementation of the cycle of intentional teaching will increase the ability of teachers to address the needs of the classroom and individual children and align teaching more closely to the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework and Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework.



The cycle of intentional teaching is an ongoing process in which teachers plan learning experiences to address specific learning standards, observe and document student progress across benchmarks; and modify curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of a preschool class and the needs of individual children.

The cycle can be divided into components including planning learning experiences, implementation, observing and documenting progress, and using this information to guide practice. The cycle is intended to be continuous and the components are often intertwined or overlapped.

Training Wheels is an intensive professional development project designed to enhance preschool teaching by assisting teachers to implement the cycle of intentional teaching in a consistent manner. Specific Training Wheels

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objectives were developed to improve teacher understanding of and ability to apply the cycle of intentional teaching to inform instruction in preschool classrooms and include:

- To improve teacher understanding of and ability to use the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks;
- To improve teacher understanding of and ability to use learning standards, assessment information and children's interest to inform curriculum and instruction;
- To improve the ability of teachers to observe and objectively document children's behaviors and skills in the classroom setting.
- To improve the ability of teachers to individualize teaching for all children, including those with an IEP.

Training Wheels has been offered to a limited number of teams from qualified preschool programs during each of the past 3 years. The initiative provides 3 days of training and 5 ½ days of onsite coaching to preschool teachers during the first year. The first two cohorts received an additional 4 days of coaching during a second year of Training Wheels. During 2010-2011 the third cohort of preschool teachers participated in Training Wheels. It is anticipated that this cohort will receive an additional year of coaching during the 2011-2012 school year. Results of evaluation activities from 2010-2011 participants are summarized within this report. A limited amount of supportive data was collected from participants in Cohorts I and II.

Evaluation Summary

Overview: Evaluation activities were completed during 2010-2011 and were designed to collect baseline data necessary to assess achievement of the goals and objectives of Training Wheels, to develop or revise necessary data collection instruments and to collect qualitative data to refine and improve the implementation process. Evaluation activities were developed and data collected to initiate the data collection process.

Evaluation Questions: The evaluation will address the following evaluation questions:

Question 1: How does Training Wheels impact the understanding and use of the cycle of intentional teaching?

- How do preschool teachers understand and use the cycle of intentional teaching?
- How does teacher understanding and use of the cycle of intentional teaching change after participation in Training Wheels?

Question 2: How does Training Wheels impact how teachers think about their teaching?

- How do teachers understand their practice and the impact of their actions on children's learning?
- How does teachers thinking about their practice change after participation in Training Wheels?
- How does intentionality impact the ability of a teacher to individualize teaching for all children?

Question 3: What is the relationship between level of administrative support provided to teachers and the ability of teachers to succeed in Training Wheels?

Data Collection Methods and Activities: Data collection methods informed process and outcome evaluation and included qualitative focus group interviews with preschool participants and the use of pre-post and end-of-project survey instruments.

Methodology: Assessing the impact of a state-wide professional development initiative requires the collection of a variety of types of data. During 2010-2011, new data collection activities were completed and evaluation tools were developed and/or revised. The evaluation was designed to collect information related to each of the project evaluation questions described previously. This report summarizes results of evaluation activities including:

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- A. Three focus group interviews: One with participants from each of Cohorts I, II and III.
- B. Pre-post administration of the revised Participant Self-Assessment, Coach's Observation Rubric and Participant Rating of Administrative Support: Cohort III only.
- C. Development and administration of the "Training Wheels End-of-Project" survey (Cohorts I, II and III)

Instrumentation and Data Collection: The instrument development and data collection process is discussed below for each component of the methodology including survey and focus group development and administration.

- A. Focus Group Interviews: Focus group interview questions for Training Wheels participants were developed linked to project goals and objectives and were designed to access perceptions of Training Wheels and the implementation strengths and challenges faced at a preschool level. Questions addressed areas including understanding and use of the cycle of intentional teaching, impact of Training Wheels participation on preschool teachers, perceptions of Training Wheels implementation and resources and support needed. Questions were reviewed by CSDE Training Wheels consultants prior to completion of focus groups.

Focus group interviews were conducted during Spring, 2011 and were facilitated by Dr. Mhora Lorentson. Each focus group interview lasted approximately 1.5 hours. Approximately 15-20 preschool teachers and administrators participated in each focus group.. Questions were incorporated into PowerPoint and projected for participants to see. Responses were taped and transcribed.

- B. Teacher Assessment Tools: A number of teacher assessment tools have been used by the CSDE during previous Training Wheels cohorts. These tools include a Participant Self-Assessment, Coach's Observation Rubric and Teacher Rating of Administrative Support as data collection instruments. During 2010-2011, the Participant Self-Assessment and the Coach's Observation Rubric were revised by Dr. Lorentson in partnership with CSDE Training Wheels consultants. Tools were revised to improve the clarity of items and Likert-type scales and to align questions more closely with Training Wheels goals and objectives. Revisions were targeted to maintain the consistency of the "new" instruments with instruments administered during previous years. All instruments were administered on-line only to Cohort III participants. A brief description of each instrument is below.

- Participant Self-Assessment: The Participant Self-Assessment was designed to assess the frequency of engagement in desired teaching behaviors and reflective processes targeted by the planning, implementation, observing and documenting and assessments components of the cycle of intentional teaching and participant understanding of the cycle of intentional teaching. The instrument is administered pre-post.
- Coach's Observation Rubric: The Coaches Observation Rubric was designed to provide coaches an opportunity to observe and record the extent to which participant behaviors and reflective processes provide evidence that criteria targeted by the cycle of intentional teaching are being met. The instrument is administered pre-post.
- Participant Rating of Administrative Support: This instrument is used to provide participants an opportunity to rate the frequency of support provided by the preschool administrators. The instrument is administered once at the end of the academic year.

- C. Training Wheels End-of-Project Survey:

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The Training Wheels End-of-Project survey was developed during Spring, 2011. Survey items were drafted to assess the perceptions of preschool staff about the Training Wheels implementation process and their perceptions of the impact of Training Wheels on classroom teaching. The survey was administered online to current, Cohort III participants. Participants from Cohorts I and II completed a hard copy survey after participating in the focus group interview and returned the survey directly to Dr. Lorentson.

Survey validity is maximized when the survey addresses all key concepts related to the issue being addressed and when the conceptual framework is reviewed by a panel of experts to ensure that no key concept was missed. Validity was maximized in this activity by the development of questions linked to the cycle of intentional teaching and by the review of all survey categories and questions by CSDE staff. Survey validity is expected to be sufficient.

Reliability is generally maximized by the development of questions following nationally accepted standards and developed at a literacy level in line with the literacy level of the target population. Survey questions were developed using these guidelines and were reviewed by CCESC and CSDE staff prior to survey administration. No statistical checks of reliability or validity were conducted.

All surveys were administered online by the CSDE in partnership with EASTCONN. Data was provided to CCESC for analysis.

Data Analysis: Conceptual analysis of responses was used to analyze focus group interview results. Survey results were analyzed using SPSS, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Frequencies, means, and totals were obtained as appropriate. Pre-post comparisons were completed using Wilcoxon's Test for Two Related Samples. Cross-tabulations and Pearson's Chi-Square were used to compare responses for individuals with high or low ratings of Administrative Support.

Participant Demographics:

Demographics for each cohort completing Training Wheels are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Cohort Number	Number of Participants	Number of Programs	Dates of Implementation
Cohort I	146 participants	43	March, 2008-June, 2008
Cohort II	66 participants	32	October, 2009-June, 2010
Cohort III	106 total 69 teachers 37 administrators	30	October, 2010-May 2011

Results

Results are described for each data collection method used.

A. Focus Group Interviews:

"As an administrator, when I walk in and look at a classroom, I can see that there is a focus and direction and that the children are able, and there's planning in terms of environment, materials that are used—it is intentional."

"What is intentional teaching? It is knowing your children and planning ahead—having an idea of what you would like them to get out of something."

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“The impact of Training Wheels? For me..I’m using, I’m observing, I’m assessing the children better.”

“It definitely helps you in the classroom and being more intentional, making sure you work with the standards.”

“Our behavior problems—we have had a lot of behavioral issues but, with Training Wheels, they have almost disappeared, just because the children are very engaged and very interested. I think it’s great.”

“We have a lot of transition issues in getting Training Wheels on the ground. I have to go back and share with my peers and they say it’s a lot of work so I end up doing all the work and I get frustrated. But...I really do feel the results are there! The transition phase is where the difficulty is.

Now we write down the learning experiences so that holds us accountable—if we haven’t scheduled when we are supposed to do this on this day then we all know it didn’t happen.

“As teachers, we’re individualizing all the time, all day, you just don’t realize it. What Training Wheels has done is it has made us realize is that we need to just write it down so we are accountable for what we are doing.”

“I think it has made us, as teachers, more confident in teaching.”

“As a teacher, it has really helped me fine tune my understanding of what to look for when assessing my kids.”

“It is really just an overwhelmingly good project.”

“I have learned that no matter what the benchmark or standard is that you’re focusing on in the classroom, when they interact with one another, no matter what you are planning for-- you have these crosswalks—the way you are looking for these observations. They are the perfect tool for everything in the classroom.”

“The hands- on coaching is like the best thing!”

Planning should be kind of based on the standards...you take the standards that you want them to learn and think about the children’s interest and then plan for that.”

“The paperwork was overwhelming at first, but it completely changed everything for our classrooms. It is so much more helpful now that I’ve learned how to do it!”

Cohort III:

In June, 2011 a focus group interview was held with approximately 25 participants in the 2010-2011 Training Wheels III Cohort. Key findings are summarized below. Comparisons to results of Cohorts I and II are provided separately.

1. Overall Perceptions

Participants were **overwhelmingly satisfied** with Training Wheels activities. Participants expressed enthusiasm in a number of areas including the **training** and **coaching** activities that were implemented during 2010-2011. Participants described Training Wheels as “It definitely helps you in the classroom and being more intentional, making sure you work with the standards” and providing a push to keep moving forward.

Participants described their positive perception of Training Wheels as resulting from a **close link between the goals and objectives** of the project and the **needs of the preschool teacher**. Training Wheels was describing as

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increasing accountability, increasing teacher ability to plan and focus on the needs of children, increasing the ability to incorporate the CT Preschool standards into the classroom setting and improving communication with peers, administrators and parents. Participants expressed excitement and satisfaction with **the crosswalks and observation tools** provided, with the emphasis on the **cycle of intentional teaching**, with the **training and coaching** provided.

Participants expressed concerns during 2010-2011 related to the **large amount of data necessary to collect and observations to complete, challenges in incorporating Training Wheels expectations into existing curricular or School Readiness expectations and inconsistency or difficulty in receiving answers to questions** that emerge during the implementation process. A number of teachers expressed frustration that, during the transition process, an individual is needed who can answer questions clearly related to implementation of the cycle of intentional teaching. Teachers described a number of times in which they “receive one answer from one person and another from another”. Additionally, concerns were frequently expressed related to the need for administrative and teacher support within the preschool setting. A number of teachers expressed frustration that “We are the only one doing all the work. there is nobody supporting us at our home preschool.”

Concerns were also expressed related to variability in resources available at the preschool setting. Specifically, some participants were completing CT Preschool Assessment Framework forms in hard copy while others had access to the on-line databases. Participants described a lack of resources as often contributing to tension and difficulty completing Training Wheels activities and fulfilling expectations. All participants expressed interest in continuing to implement the cycle of intentional teaching during the 2011-2012 academic year.

2. Strengths of Training Wheels

Respondents generally described Training Wheels as being **well-received** by participating teachers. Training Wheels was described as “making us more confident in our teaching and our parents too”, as encouraging “everyone to work together”, “providing data to support educational choices and communicate with parents and administrators about a *child’s* progress”, and teaching teachers “*what to look for when observing their children*”. Participants were extremely enthusiastic regarding the training and coaching provided through Training Wheels.

3. Challenges Faced by Training Wheels

Respondents identified a number of opportunities for improvement in the implementation of Training Wheels. Challenges cited by participants included ongoing difficulties with **communication** within and between teachers and administrators in the preschool setting, a **need for more consistent guidance and support** during the initial transition period of implementing the cycle of intentional teaching, a need for **ongoing communication and networking** regarding Training Wheels activities, and a need for an **active and supportive administrator** to provide support and hold teachers accountable for progress. Additional challenges include the need for flexibility in scheduling coaches visits to schools and a need for coaches to get “**down and dirty in the classroom setting.**”

4. Impact of Training Wheels on Preschool Teaching

Participants described the primary impact of Training Wheels as **increasing the ability of teachers to be intentional** in their teaching. “Intentional teaching” was defined by participants as **the ability to plan your teaching according to the child’s needs**, by understanding the standards and developing activities that can be used to bring the standards into the classroom, by “knowing your children and planning ahead” and by “having an idea of what you would like them to get out of something”. Participants described Training Wheels as teaching teachers how to **observe, understand** and **assess** their children and “teaching us what to look for in our kids”.

5. Recommendations for Training Wheels

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Respondents provided a number of recommendations for Training Wheels. These include the development of a **visual that summarizes the project benchmarks**, an increase in **“hands-on” activities**, the development of an **online guide describing benchmarks and activities** or scenarios that could be completed to help a student achieve a benchmark, development of a **educational video or seminar** that could be provided to new staff members as an orientation, and the provision of **additional group meetings** after the training to provide participants an opportunity to discuss needs and issues as they arise.

Comparison to Cohorts I and II:

Results of focus groups with Cohort I and II participants are very similar in content to the results from Cohort III provided above. In general, Cohort I and II participants were even more enthusiastic regarding Training Wheels than participants in Cohort III. All Cohort I and II participants were currently still implementing the cycle of intentional teaching. It is noted that participants in Cohorts I and II have had a much longer period of time to implement the cycle of intentional teaching than individuals in Cohort I and therefore have had sufficient time to overcome the “transition” period. Like their Cohort III counterparts, participants in Cohorts I and II described the transition period as difficult. However, Cohort I and II participants viewed the transition as temporary and the overall process as extremely beneficial. As one Cohort II participant stated:

“For some of our teachers it was a paradigm shift to go through from what we did before to programming based on performance standards. Some of them were kicking and screaming and it was very difficult, especially for some of our more seasoned teachers who have been doing it this way for 20 years. They were, but as much as they say that it was hard, they have also accepted it and now they like it much better because they realize the benefit of it and...it is more scientific in a way..it is more intentional so they can see where their children are at, even though maybe they were doing it before and it was in their head, now it is documented and it is right out there in front of them...We also use the software and that is excellent. The teachers love that!!”

Participants in Cohorts I and II described the online CT Preschool Assessment Framework software as extremely beneficial and capable of producing summary printouts that are used to communicate regarding the child with both other teachers and parents.

As with Cohort III participants, these individuals described the impact of Training Wheels as extremely positive, **more focused on children, more intentional and more effective**. However, they also described the transition for the teachers as “way more work”. Teachers described Training Wheels as turning them into teachers, not just child care workers. Teachers perceived this change to be extremely positive but noted that the salary teachers received did not provide them the benefits commensurate with the increased workload.

Cohort I and II participants described Training Wheels as beneficial to their relationships with parents. As one participant stated, *“It is easy to present what the children are learning. The parents are familiar with the terms and with benchmarks and every quarter we do a newsletter so they know the benchmark, they know what performance standard is, so the parents are more comfortable and more knowledgeable of the PCF and PAS.”* Training Wheels was described as helping parents know that *“We aren’t just babysitting.”*

Teachers described the **use of assessments** in Training Wheels as extremely positively and stated that the use of assessments increases the teachers’ ability to “cover everything”, provides an opportunity for teachers to “be creative” and creates a challenge for teachers to “bring it all together”.

Cohort I and II participants described the **coaching as critical** to success and recommended that two years of coaching be provided to schools. Cohort II participants had received two full years of coaching and described the second year as instrumental in helping them to incorporate Training Wheels into the day-to-day work of the teacher. As one individual stated, *“The second year was pretty crucial because it really helped the teachers to zero in on*

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areas that they felt weak in and also to bring in more, they really increased in their planning as far as bringing in *the right questions.*”

Like their Cohort III peers, Cohort I and II participants recommended that a summary be provided that links the standards to specific activities for each benchmark, that more consistent opportunities be available to ask questions and receive immediate feedback and that Training Wheels be expanded to include sites that do not receive School Readiness funding.

B. Teacher Assessment Tools:

1. Participant Self-Assessment:

Seventy individuals completed the pre-test and fifty one individuals completed the post-test. Wilcoxon Signed Rank test for Two Dependent samples was used to conduct statistical comparisons on paired pre-post results using an alpha level of $p < .05$. Fifty one pre-post pairs were identified providing a paired teacher response rate of 74%. Items for which statistical differences were identified between the pre and post-test administration are bolded and italicized in the tables below. An arrow is used to identify the increased mean.

Participants were asked to rate the frequency of use of behaviors tied to each component of the cycle of intentional teaching. Their responses are summarized in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2: Cohort III Participant Self-Assessment: Frequency of Use of Cycle of Intentional Teaching Pre-Post Survey Results: Percent and Mean

Note: Means and frequencies reported are overall means for the entire pre or post-test sample. Statistical comparisons were conducted on paired pre-post results only.

Please rate the <u>frequency</u> with which you engage in each of the following behaviors...	Pre-Test			Post-Test		
	Not at All or Sometimes (1-2X/week) (1 or 2)	Most of the Time (3 or more X per week) or All the time (3 or 4)	Mean	Not at All or Sometimes (1-2X/week) (1 or 2)	Most of the Time (3 or more X per week) or All the time (3 or 4)	Mean
Planning....						
1) I use standards as a basis for creating, or helping to create, lesson plans.	31.4%	68.6%	2.9	1.9%	98.1%	3.8 ↑
2) I think about individual children as I plan what to do in the classroom.	20.0	80.0	3.2	3.8	96.2	3.7 ↑
3) I plan for how I will observe and document a child's behavior during a learning experience.	51.4	48.6	2.6	9.6	90.4	3.3 ↑
4) I plan my teaching strategies based on children's progress across benchmarks.	44.3	55.7	2.6	15.4	84.6	3.4 ↑
5) I create, or help create, lesson plans in a variety of experiences/centers.	22.9	77.1	3.2	3.8	96.2	3.7 ↑
Implementation....						
1) I can explain which performance standards I am addressing when I engage with children in plan.	42.9	57.1	2.7	7.7	92.3	3.3 ↑
2) When I work with children in small groups, I plan how I will make children progress toward achieving performance standards.	34.3	65.7	2.8	3.8	96.2	3.6 ↑

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Please rate the <u>frequency</u> with which you engage in each of the following behaviors...	Not at All or Sometimes (1-2X/week) (1 or 2)	Most of the Time (3 or more X per week) or All the time (3 or 4)	Mean	Not at All or Sometimes (1-2X/week) (1 or 2)	Most of the Time (3 or more X per week) or All the time (3 or 4)	Mean
3) I individualize support to children as planned.	25.7	74.3	3.0	3.8	96.2	3.5 ↑
Observing and Documenting....						
1) I document children's behaviors or actions.	32.9	67.1	2.8	5.8	94.2	3.4 ↑
2) My documented observations relate to performance standards.	45.7	54.3	2.7	3.8	96.2	3.6 ↑
3) I observe a child's behavior and actions and then use that information to change my teaching to a child's needs.	28.6	71.4	2.9	5.8	94.2	3.5 ↑
Assessing....						
1) I use child assessment information as a basis for planning.	42.9	57.1	2.6	13.5	86.5	3.4 ↑
2) I use the class profiles to inform my planning	51.4	48.6	2.3	26.9	73.1	3.0 ↑
3) I use the child profile to differentiate my instruction.	50.0	50.0	2.4	17.3	82.7	3.2 ↑
4) I use child assessments to support curriculum development.	35.7	64.3	2.7	13.5	86.5	3.4 ↑
5) I use information I collect to complete child assessments.	25.7	74.3	3.0	11.5	88.5	3.6 ↑
6) I use child assessment information as a basis for engaging with children.	40.0	60.0	2.7	15.4	84.6	3.2 ↑
Mental Model/Intentionality....						
1) I think about my teaching in a way that connects standards to observation and planning.	40.0	60.0	2.8	3.8	96.2	3.6 ↑
2) I think about how I can adjust my teaching to meet the needs of individual children. NO	14.3	85.7	3.2	7.7	92.3	3.5
3) I select the teaching strategies I use based on the needs of children.	15.7	84.3	3.2	7.7	92.3	3.5
4) I can describe how I decide what teaching techniques to use.	40.0	60.0	2.7	15.4	84.6	3.3 ↑
5) I can describe how the components of the cycle of intentional teaching are connected to one another.	50.0	50.0	2.6	7.7	92.3	3.3 ↑

As identified in Table 2 above, for all but two items the paired post-test mean was statistically higher than the pre-test mean using an alpha level of $p < .05$ indicating increased use of each component of the cycle of intentional teaching over time.

Table 3: Cohort III Participant Self-Assessment: Understanding of Cycle of Intentional Teaching Pre-Post Survey Results: Percent and Mean

Note: Means and frequencies reported are overall means for the entire pre or post-test sample. Statistical comparisons were conducted on paired pre-post results only.

Pre-Test

Post-Test

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Please rate your <u>understanding</u> of <i>each of the following.....</i>	No Under- standing or Very Little Under- standing (1 or 2)	Some Under- standing (3)	Pretty Good Under- standing or Lots of Under- standing (4or 5)	Mean
General Knowledge				
1) The four developmental domains into which the standards are organized.	10.0	15.7	74.3	3.9
2) The connections between the standards in the Preschool Assessment Framework and the standards in the Preschool Curriculum Framework.	20.0	28.6	51.4	3.3
3) The connections between the benchmarks of the Preschool Assessment Framework standards and skill development of young children.	12.9	34.3	52.9	3.5
4) How to use information collected on a child's progress across the developmental benchmarks to plan teaching strategies to increase the child's skills.	12.9	30.0	57.1	3.6
5) How to plan teaching behaviors (i.e. modeling, questioning, prompting) to meet a child's needs.	2.9	22.9	74.3	3.9
6) How to vary the environment, materials, and classroom schedule as a way to meet a child's needs.	2.9	12.9	84.3	4.1
7) How to differentiate (or modify) learning experiences to meet a child's individual needs.	2.9	22.9	74.3	3.9
8) The characteristics of effective observations.	11.4	44.3	44.3	3.4
9) How to monitor a child's progress (child profile) to differentiate instruction for the child.	14.3	35.7	50.0	3.4
10) How to use data related to a child's progress (child profile) to differentiate instruction for the child.	17.1	34.3	48.6	3.4
11) How to use the child's profile to communicate with families.	22.9	20.0	57.1	3.5
12) How to use the class profile to plan for classroom learning experiences.	20.0	34.3	45.7	3.3

No Under- standing or Very Little Under- standing (1 or 2)	Some Under- standing (3)	Pretty Good Under- standing or Lots of Under- standing (4or 5)	Mean
0	0	100.0	4.6↑
0	17.3	82.7	4.1↑
0	1.9	98.1	4.4↑
0	3.8	96.2	4.3↑
0	1.9	98.1	4.5↑
0	1.9	98.1	4.7↑
0	3.8	96.2	4.5↑
1.9	5.8	92.3	4.3↑
0	9.6	90.4	4.3↑
0	9.6	90.4	4.3↑
1.9	13.5	84.6	4.3↑
1.9	3.8	94.2	4.3↑

As identified in Table 3 above, for 12/12 items related to knowledge of the cycle of intentional teaching, the paired post-test mean was statistically higher than the pre-test mean using an alpha level of $p < .05$ indicating increased knowledge of each component of the cycle of intentional teaching over time.

2. Coach's Observation Rubric:

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At two times during each year, the coach assigned to a program observed the preschool teacher in the classroom and rated that individual’s performance on items linked to the cycle of intentional teaching. The results of these coach’s observations are summarized in Table 3 below.

Sixty two teachers were observed for the pre-observation and fifty eight for the post observation providing paired responses for 54 teachers. Wilcoxon Signed Rank test for Two Dependent samples was used to conduct statistical comparisons on paired pre-post results using an alpha level of $p < .05$. Fifty four pre-post pairs were identified providing a paired response rate of 78%. Items for which statistical differences were identified between the pre and post-test administration are bolded and italicized in the table below. An arrow is used to identify the increased mean.

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Table 4: Cohort III Coach's Observation Rubric: Understanding of Cycle of Intentional Teaching Pre-Post Survey Results: Percent and Mean

Note: Means and frequencies reported are overall means for the entire pre or post-test sample. Statistical comparisons were conducted on paired pre-post results only.

Pre-Observation						Post-Observation					
	No evidence of criteria being met (1)	Some evidence of criteria being met (1 or 2 instances) (2)	Sufficient evidence of criteria being met (3 or 4 instances) (3)	Criteria a fully met. (consistently used) (4)	Mean		No evidence of criteria being met (1)	Some evidence of criteria being met (1 or 2 instances) (2)	Sufficient evidence of criteria being met (3 or 4 instances) (3)	Criteria a fully met. (consistently used) (4)	Mean
Planning....											
1) Lesson plans reflect standards in a variety of experiences/centers.	9.5%	55.6%	31.7%	3.2%	2.3		6.9%	22.4%	41.4%	29.3%	2.9↑
2) Planning sessions/plans reflect individualization.	55.6	27.0	11.1	6.3	1.7		8.6	44.8	31.0	15.5	2.5↑
3) Teachers observe and document a child's behavior during learning experiences	33.3	58.7	6.3	1.6	1.8		6.9	24.1	41.4	27.6	2.9↑
4) Lesson plans reflect the use of teaching strategies based on children's progress across benchmarks.	66.7	28.6	3.2	1.6	1.4		20.7	36.2	31.0	12.1	2.3↑
Implementation....											
5) Teacher engages learners during play and articulates which performance standards were facilitated.	30.2	54.0	12.7	3.2	1.9		6.9	24.1	46.6	22.4	2.8↑
6) Teacher individualizes support as planned.	57.1	38.1	4.8	0	1.5		15.5	29.3	37.9	17.2	2.6↑
7) When working with children in small groups, teacher directs efforts to help children make progress across benchmarks.	54.0	39.7	6.3	0	1.5		10.3	37.9	34.5	17.2	2.6↑
Observing and Documenting....											
8) Staff systematically observes and documents children's behavior.	33.9	56.5	9.7	0	1.8		6.9	27.6	37.9	27.6	2.9↑
9) Documented observations related to planned performance standards.	35.5	50.0	11.3	3.2	1.8		3.4	27.6	32.8	36.2	3.0↑
10) Teacher uses results of observations to adapt teaching behavior to meet child's needs.	44.3	52.5	1.6	1.6	1.6		10.3	46.6	32.8	10.3	2.4↑

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	No evidence of criteria being met (1)	Some evidence of criteria being met (1 or 2 instances) (2)	Sufficient evidence of criteria being met (3 or 4 instances) (3)	Criteria fully met. (consistently uses) (4)	Mean		No evidence of criteria being met (1)	Some evidence of criteria being met (1 or 2 instances) (2)	Sufficient evidence of criteria being met (3 or 4 instances) (3)	Criteria fully met. (consistently used) (4)	Mean
<i>Assessing....</i>											
11) Lesson plans show evidence that teacher systematically uses data collected to inform planning.	65.1	31.7	3.2	0	1.4		20.7	34.5	34.5	10.3	2.3 ↑
12) Child assessment information is used as a basis for planning.	44.3	52.5	3.3	0	1.6		12.1	44.8	31.0	12.1	2.4 ↑
13) Teacher uses class profiles to inform planning.	80.0	16.7	3.3	0	1.2		31.0	46.6	17.2	5.2	2.0 ↑
14) Teacher uses child profile to differentiate instruction.	86.7	10.0	3.3	0	1.2		27.6	43.1	19.0	10.3	2.1 ↑
15) Teacher uses child assessments to support curriculum development.	42.4	49.2	8.5	0	1.7		10.3	43.1	34.5	12.1	2.5 ↑
16) Teacher uses information collected to complete child assessments.	33.9	52.5	13.6	0	1.8		5.2	36.2	29.3	29.3	2.8 ↑
17) Staff uses child assessment information as a basis for engaging with children.	26.7	63.3	10.0	0	1.8		5.9	41.2	41.2	11.8	2.6 ↑
<i>Mental Model....</i>											
18) Lesson plans show evidence that teacher connects standards to observation and planning.	45.2	43.5	8.1	3.2	1.7		8.6	25.9	41.4	24.1	2.8 ↑
19) Lesson plans show evidence that teacher adapts teaching to meet the needs of individual children.	62.3	34.4	1.6	1.6	1.4		19.0	31.0	41.4	8.6	2.4 ↑
20) Lesson plans show evidence that teacher uses a variety of teaching strategies to help children progress across benchmarks.	62.3	34.4	0	3.3	1.4		20.7	22.4	46.6	10.3	2.5 ↑
21) Teacher can describe to the coach how decisions are made regarding what teaching techniques to use on a particular day.	33.9	59.3	1.7	5.1	1.8		8.6	39.7	36.2	15.5	2.6 ↑
22) Teacher can describe how the components of the cycle of intentional teaching are interrelated.	32.8	52.5	9.8	4.9	1.9		3.4	27.6	41.4	27.6	2.9 ↑

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All items showed statistically significant increases at $p < .05$ between the initial and post-participation observation. Data indicate significant changes in teaching behaviors as observed by coaches after participation in Training Wheels.

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3. Participant Rating of Administrative Support:

Fifty one teachers completed the participant rating of administrative support providing a response rate of 74%.

**Table 5: Cohort III Participant Rating of Administrative Support
End-of-Year Survey Results: Percent**

	Not at all	Sometimes	Most of the time	All the time
1) My administrator provides me with feedback on my lesson planning.	5.9%	25.5%	31.4%	37.3%
2) My administrator provides me with feedback on my observation and documentation.	15.7	31.4	39.2	13.7
3) My administrator provides me with feedback on my assessments.	15.7	39.2	27.5	17.6
4) My administrator provides time for our time to meet.	2.0	25.5	37.3	35.3
5) My administrator is supportive of my progress toward intentional teaching.	3.9	3.9	25.5	66.7
6) I generally feel supported in my work with my administrator.	6.1	20.4	20.4	53.1

The majority of teachers perceived themselves as being provided administrative support “Most of the time” or “All the time” for most items listed. It should be noted however that approximately half of teachers stated that they received feedback on their assessments and their observation and documentation from their administrators either “Not at all” or “Sometimes”.

**Table 6: Cohort III Participant Rating of Administrative Support: Frequency of Feedback
End-of-Year Survey Results: Percent**

	Yearly	Every few months	Monthly	Weekly
1) Lesson planning: If so, how often.	4.3%	19.6%	32.6%	43.5%
2) Observation and Documentation: If so, how often.	2.3	39.5	32.6	25.6
3) Assessments: If so, how often.	2.4	51.2	26.8	19.5

The majority of teachers perceived themselves as being provided administrative support “Monthly” or “Weekly” for two of the three items listed. Over half of teachers received feedback on their assessments from their administrators either “Yearly” or “Every few months”.

Comparisons of Teacher Self-Assessment to Administrative Support:

Statistical comparisons were completed between participant perceived level of administrative support and results of the post-administration of the teacher self-assessment. Level of administrative support was calculated by summing all variables related to administrative support to obtain a range of total administrative support. Totals of the items reported above resulted in a range of scores from 8 to 24. This range was divided in two approximately equal parts with scores ranging from 8-15 considered to be “low” administrative support and scores above 15 receiving a score of “high” administrative support. Using this calculation, 14 individuals were identified as having “low” administrative support and 33 individuals as having “high” administrative support.

Similarly, responses to items on the teacher self-assessment were divided into “high” and “low” categories with high items receiving a score of 3 or 4 and low items receiving a score of 1 and 2. For items related to skills and knowledge items receiving a “3” or middle score were dropped from the analysis.

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Table 7: Cohort III Comparison by Level of Administrative Support

	Low Support Mean	High Support Mean
Frequency of Use of Cycle of Intentional Teaching		
1) I use standards as a basis for creating, or helping to create, lesson plans.	3.7	3.7
2) I think about individual children as I plan what to do in the classroom.	3.6	3.7
3) I plan for how I will observe and document a child's behavior during a learning experience.	3.4	3.4
4) I plan my teaching strategies based on children's progress across benchmarks.	3.4	3.4
5) I create, or help create, lesson plans in a variety of experiences/centers.	3.6	3.8
6) I can explain which performance standards I am addressing when I engage with children in planning..	3.0	3.3
7) When I work with children in small groups, I plan how I will make children progress toward achieving performance standards.	3.6	3.5
8) I individualize support to children as planned.	3.5	3.5
9) I document children's behaviors or actions.	3.6	3.4
10) My documented observations relate to performance standards.	3.7	3.6
11) I observe a child's behavior and actions and then use that information to change my teaching to a child's needs.	3.6	3.6
12) I use child assessment information as a basis for planning.	3.3	3.4
13) I use the class profiles to inform my planning	2.9	3.1
14) I use the child profile to differentiate my instruction.	2.9	3.4 ↑
15) I use child assessments to support curriculum development.	3.4	3.5
16) I use information I collect to complete child assessments.	3.6	3.6
17) I use child assessment information as a basis for engaging with children.	3.1	3.2
Understanding of Cycle of Intentional Teaching		
1) I think about my teaching in a way that connects standards to observation and planning.	3.7	3.4
2) I think about how I can adjust my teaching to meet the needs of individual children.	3.4	3.5
3) I select the teaching strategies I use based on the needs of children.	3.6	3.5
4) I can describe how I decide what teaching techniques to use.	3.3	3.2
5) I can describe how the components of the cycle of intentional teaching are connected to one another.	3.1	3.3
6) The four developmental domains into which the standards are organized.	4.6	4.6
7) The connections between the standards in the Preschool Assessment Framework and the standards in the Preschool Curriculum Framework.	4.0	4.0
8) The connections between the benchmarks of the Preschool Assessment Framework standards and skill development of young children.	4.4	4.3
9) How to use information collected on a child's progress across the developmental benchmarks to plan teaching strategies to increase the child's skills.	4.5	4.3
10) How to plan teaching behaviors (i.e. modeling, questioning, prompting) to meet a child's needs.	4.4	4.5
11) How to vary the environment, materials, and classroom schedule as a way to meet a child's needs.	4.6	4.6
12) How to differentiate (or modify) learning experiences to meet a child's individual needs.	4.4	4.4
13) The characteristics of effective observations.	4.4	4.2
14) How to monitor a child's progress (child profile) to differentiate instruction for the child.	4.4	4.2
15) How to use data related to a child's progress to differentiate instruction for the child.	4.3	4.2
16) How to use the child's profile to communicate with families.	4.5	4.2

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	Low Support Mean	High Support Mean
17) How to use the class profile to plan for classroom learning experiences.	4.4	4.2

Results of comparisons were examined through cross-tabulations and Pearson's Chi-Square. Only one item showed a significant difference based on Level of Administrative Support using an alpha level of $p < .05$. Individuals with a high level of administrative support were more likely to use the child profile to differentiate instruction than individuals with a low level of administrative support.

C. Training Wheels End-of-Year Satisfaction Survey:

Participants in each cohort completed an "End-of-Project" Survey during Spring, 2011. Demographic information from each cohort is provided below. Complete results are presented from Cohort III participants only. Means from Cohorts I and II are presented for comparison purposes.

Demographic Information:

Cohort I: Twelve participants representing six programs completed the survey. The majority of participants (83%) had more than 6 years of preschool teaching experience and 17% had taught from 4-5 years. Almost all (92%) had attended a 3 day training experience and 100% had participated in three days of intensive on-sight coaching. 42% had an Associate degree in Early Childhood, 25% had a CDA or Child Development Associate degree, 33% had a Bachelor's degree and 25% had a Master's degree. One individual having an M.S. degree received that degree in ECE, the other in Special Education. The number of credits in ECE reported by Master's degree participants ranged from 12 for the SPED degree to 90 for the individual with an ECE degree. Early childhood teachers with Bachelor degrees received these degrees in Early Childhood (2), Elementary Education (1) and Psychology (1). The number of ECE credits received during the Bachelor's degree ranged from 15 to 60.

Cohort II: 9 participants representing 4 programs completed the survey. The majority of participants (89%) had more than 6 years of preschool teaching experience and 11% had taught from 4-5 years. Almost all (89%) had attended the 3 day training experience and participated three days of intensive on-sight coaching. 33% had an Associate degree in Early Childhood, none had a CDA or Child Development Associate degree, 56% had a Bachelor's degree and 22% had a Master's degree. All individuals having an M.S. degree received that degree in ECE with the number of credits in ECE reported by Master's degree participants ranged from 36 to 74. Early childhood teachers with Bachelor degrees received these degrees in Early Childhood (2), Elementary Education (1) and Spanish (1). Only one individual reported the number of ECE credits received during the Bachelor's degree. This individual reported 12 credits..

Cohort III: 55 participants representing 24 programs completed the survey providing a response rate of 52%. The majority of participants (44%) had more than 10 years of preschool teaching experience, 38% had taught from 4-10 years and 18% had taught for three years or less. Almost all (89%) had attended a 3 day training experience and participated in three days of intensive on-sight coaching (80%). 18% had an Associate degree in Early Childhood, 27% had a CDA or Child Development Associate degree, 36% had a Bachelor's degree and 21% had a Master's degree. Five individuals had "other" experience with "other" generally defined as a portion of a degree. All but one individual having an M.S. degree received that degree in ECE. The one individual who did not have an ECE concentration, stated that she had an elementary education degree. The number of credits in ECE reported by Master's degree participants ranged from 12 to 52 with a number of individuals stating that they "Did not remember." Early childhood teachers with Bachelor degrees received these degrees in a range of concentrations including Child Development (3), Communication, Early Childhood (4), Elementary Education (2), Family Studies (3), Psychology (1), Sociology (5) and Science. The number of ECE credits received during the Bachelor's degree ranged from 0 to 80.

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Results:

Participants rated their satisfaction with items related to Training Wheels. Results are summarized in Table 8.

**Table 8: Participant Satisfaction
Cohorts I, II and III: Percent and Mean**

Note: Frequencies are provided only for Cohort III. For comparison purposes, means for each item are provided for Cohorts I and II.

	Cohort III				Cohorts I and II	
	Very Dissatisfied or Dissatisfied (1 or 2)	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied (3)	Satisfied or Very Satisfied (4 or 5)	Cohort III Mean	Cohort I Mean	Cohort II Mean
1) Clarity of expectations during participation in Training Wheels.	9.3%	11.1%	79.6%	4.19	3.92	4.67
2) Usefulness of handouts offered during professional development session.	3.8	15.1	81.1	4.32	4.27	4.78
3) Quality of materials provided regarding the cycle of intentional teaching.	1.9	7.5	90.6	4.49	4.64	4.44
4) Quality of Training Wheels professional development sessions.	3.7	13.0	83.3	4.37	4.00	4.78
5) Quality of onsite coaching provided.	7.5	9.4	83.0	4.45	4.17	4.78
6) Quality of surveys used for self-assessment throughout the project.	5.7	20.8	73.6	4.08	4.00	4.22

All items received a mean response of 4 (Satisfied) or above each year of Training Wheels indicating participants were generally satisfied or very satisfied with Training Wheels activities. The only exception occurred during the first year of implementation. Cohort I participants provided a mean rating of 3.9 for “Clarity of expectations during participation in Training Wheels”. Over 70% of Cohort II participants responded “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” to each item.

Participants also provided perceptions of the usefulness of each form of professional development provided. Their responses are summarized in Table 9.

**Table 9: Type of Professional Development Which Was Most Useful
Cohorts I, II and III: Percent**

	Cohort I	Cohort II	Cohort III
Training Sessions	17%		12%
Coaching	8%		24%
Combination of Both	75%	100%	65%

The majority of respondents within each cohort considered the combination of training sessions and coaching to be most beneficial to project participants.

Participants rated their perception of the impact of Training Wheels participation on their skills and knowledge. Results are summarized in Table 10.

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Table 10: Impact of Participation on Skills and Knowledge
Cohorts I, II and III: Percent and Mean

Note: Frequencies are provided only for Cohort III. For comparison purposes, means for each item are provided for Cohorts I and II.

	Cohort III				Cohorts I and II	
	Strongly Disagree or Disagree (1 or 2)	Neither Disagree nor Agree (3)	Agree or Strongly Agree (4 or 5)	Mean	Cohort I Mean	Cohort II Mean
1) Training Wheels helped me think about what I do in the classroom.	1.9%	7.4%	90.7%	4.54	4.83	4.78
2) Training Wheels helped me to understand how my actions affect student learning.	1.8	5.5	92.7	4.55	4.83	5.00
3) I am satisfied with Training Wheels.	5.6	14.8	79.6	4.31	4.42	4.38
4) I am able to apply the cycle of intentional teaching in the classroom.	1.8	.0	98.2	4.64	4.75	4.71
5) Training Wheels taught me to apply the cycle of intentional teaching in the classroom.	3.8	5.7	90.6	4.49	4.58	4.78
6) I would recommend participation in Training Wheels to a friend.	9.3	9.3	81.5	4.37	4.83	5.00
7) I will continue to use the cycle of intentional teaching in the classroom after Training Wheels is over.	1.9	.0	98.1	4.74	4.92	4.89
8) The information related to learning standards/assessment that I collect in the classroom helps me be a better teacher.	1.9	7.4	90.7	4.59	4.92	4.89
9) Participating in Training Wheels was a waste of time.	61.1	16.7	22.2	2.17	1.17	1.00
10) It is useful to document children's behaviors in the classroom.	2.0	2.0	96.1	4.69	4.75	5.00
11) Training Wheels helped me to individualize my teaching to meet the needs of students.	1.9	5.7	92.5	4.58	4.58	4.89
12) I received the support I needed from my administrators to complete Training Wheels.	15.1	7.5	77.4	4.13	4.55	4.86
13) Training Wheels is a highly effective professional development project.	7.5	13.2	79.2	4.40	4.58	4.89

All items listed received a mean response of 4.0 or above indicating a high level of agreement with items related to usefulness of and satisfaction with Training Wheels. Similarly, over 75% of respondents “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” with each item listed. The one exception was the negatively worded item “Participating in Training Wheels was a waste of time”. Over sixty percent of participants responded “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” to this item.

Data Strengths and Limitations

This report summarizes data collection efforts developed and implemented to present an evaluation of Training Wheels.

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The data collection effort has the following strengths:

- Revised and improved data collection tools linked directly to Training Wheel goals and objective;
- Diversified data collection strategies including focus groups, pre-post and end-of-project surveys of teachers.
- Good teacher participation in surveys by Cohort III participants;
- Excellent participation of Cohort III teachers in pre-surveys;
- Excellent participation of teachers in focus group interview sessions;

However, as with any research study, data collection and use of data has some limitations, including:

- Post-completion data collection from Cohorts I and II limited the amount and type of data available.
- Decreased participation of teachers and coaches in post assessment data collection efforts.
- Reliability and validity assessment of data collection instruments has not been completed.
- Time and budget limitations limited the ability to collect data to assess the impact of administrative support on teacher performance.

Conclusions

Question 1: How does Training Wheels impact the understanding and use of the cycle of intentional teaching?

- How do preschool teachers understand and use the cycle of intentional teaching?
- How does teacher understanding and use of the cycle of intentional teaching change after participation in Training Wheels?

Results indicate that Training Wheels has had a significant positive impact on the ability of preschool teachers to understand and use the cycle of intentional teaching. Focus group participants describe Training Wheels as increasing their understanding of and ability to use the cycle of intentional teaching including each of the four components of planning, implementing, observing and documenting and assessing.

Qualitative focus group results are supported by Teacher Self-Assessment pre-post results. For 17/17 items related to the frequency of the use of behaviors linked to the cycle of intentional teaching, paired post-test results were statistically higher than pre-test results indicating increased use of each component of the cycle of intentional teaching over time. Similarly, post-assessment results were higher than pre-assessment results for 12/12 items related to understanding of the cycle of intentional teaching.

Results of the Coach's Observation of Teaching Behaviors support results of the Teacher's Self-Assessment with significant improvement observed for 17/17 items linked to the use of the cycle of intentional teaching between the first and last observations.

Data overwhelmingly indicate that the teacher knowledge and ability to use the cycle of intentional teaching increased during participation in Training Wheels.

Question 2: How does Training Wheels impact how teachers think about their teaching?

- How do teachers understand their practice and the impact of their actions on children's learning?
- How does teachers thinking about their practice change after participation in Training Wheels?
- How does intentionality impact the ability of a teacher to individualize teaching for all children?

Results overwhelmingly indicate that Training Wheels has a significant positive impact on the way teachers think about their teaching. Focus group participants from each Cohort describe that Training Wheels as increasing their intentionality in teaching, their understanding of the learning needs of children, and changing their perception of the role of the preschool teacher from "child care-giver" to "teacher". Focus group participants describe Training

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Wheels as helping them to identify and understand the individual needs of the children and to adapt their teaching behaviors to address those needs.

Qualitative focus group results are supported by Teacher Self-Assessment pre-post results. For 3/5 items related to the Mental Model/Intentionality of Teaching, paired post-test results were statistically higher than pre-test results indicating increased practice of intentional teaching over time. Teacher Self-Assessment results show an increase in a teacher's ability to *"Think about my teaching in a way that connects standards to observation and planning"*, to *"Describe how I decide what teaching techniques to use"* and to *"Describe how the components of the cycle of intentional teaching are connected to each other."*

The results of the Coach's Observation of Teaching Behaviors supported results of the Teacher's Self-Assessment with significant improvement being observed for 5/5 items linked to the Mental Model/Intentionality between the first and last observations.

Data overwhelmingly indicate that teachers and coaches perceive that Training Wheels participation to have impacted teacher behaviors and thought processes in a variety of areas including an increase in the intentionality of preschool teachers' behavior, and changes in the ways in which teachers think about their teaching after completion of Training Wheels.

Question 3: What is the relationship between level of administrative support provided to teachers and the ability of teachers to succeed in Training Wheels?

Minimal data was available to address this research question. Focus group participants describe a strong and defined relationship between the level of administrative support provided to teachers and the ability of teachers to succeed in Training Wheels. However, statistical comparisons of results of teacher post-assessments by level of administrative support identified only one statistically significant relationship. Individuals with a high level of administrative support were more likely to use the child profile to differentiate instruction than individuals with a low level of administrative support.

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Fall Kindergarten Entrance Inventory

The following Performance Level (PL) Literals describe the characteristics of a typical student at each performance level. These will be used to rate each student on each of the six domains.

Performance Level 1: *Students at this level demonstrate emerging skills in the specified domain and require a large degree of instructional support.*

Performance Level 2: *Students at this level inconsistently demonstrate the skills in the specified domain and require some instructional support.*

Performance Level 3: *Students at this level consistently demonstrate the skills in the specified domain and require minimal instructional support.*

Directions: The indicators listed below each domain are examples of the skills a student should be able to demonstrate at the beginning of the kindergarten year; however, these are not the only skills to be considered. Rate each student in your class on each of the six domains. Use the Performance Levels (PL) above and all available and pertinent information when rating a student.

Language Skills

PL Rating

☐

At what level does the student:

- Participate in conversations
- Retell information from a story read to him/her
- Follow simple two-step verbal directions
- Speak using sentences of at least 5 words
- Communicate feelings and needs
- Listen attentively to a speaker

Literacy Skills

PL Rating

☐

At what level does the student:

- Hold a book and turn pages from the front to the back
- Understand that print conveys meaning
- Explore books independently
- Recognize printed letters, especially in their name and familiar printed words
- Match/connect letters and sounds
- Identify some initial sounds
- Demonstrate emergent writing

Numeracy Skills**PL Rating**☐**At what level does the student:**

- Count to 10
 - Demonstrate one-to-one correspondence while counting (e.g., touches objects as he/she counts)
 - Measure objects using a variety of everyday items
 - Identify simple shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles
 - Identify patterns
 - Sort and group objects by size, shape, function (use), or other attributes
 - Understand sequence of events (e.g., before, after, yesterday, today, or tomorrow)
-

Physical/Motor Skills**PL Rating**☐**At what level does the student:**

- Run, jump, or balance
 - Kick or throw a ball, climb stairs or dance
 - Write or draw using writing instruments (e.g., markers, chalk, pencils, etc.)
 - Perform tasks, such as completing puzzles, stringing beads, or cutting with scissors
-

Creative/Aesthetic Skills**PL Rating**☐**At what level does the student:**

- Draw, paint, sculpt, or build to represent experiences
 - Participate in pretend play
 - Enjoy or participate in musical experiences (e.g., singing, clapping, drumming, or dancing)
-

Personal/Social Skills**PL Rating**☐**At what level does the student:**

- Engage in self-selected activities
- Interact with peers to play or work cooperatively
- Use words to express own feelings or to identify conflicts
- Seek peer or adult help to resolve a conflict
- Follow classroom routines

Grants for Enhanced Assessment Instruments

Kindergarten Entry Assessment Competition

Project Narrative

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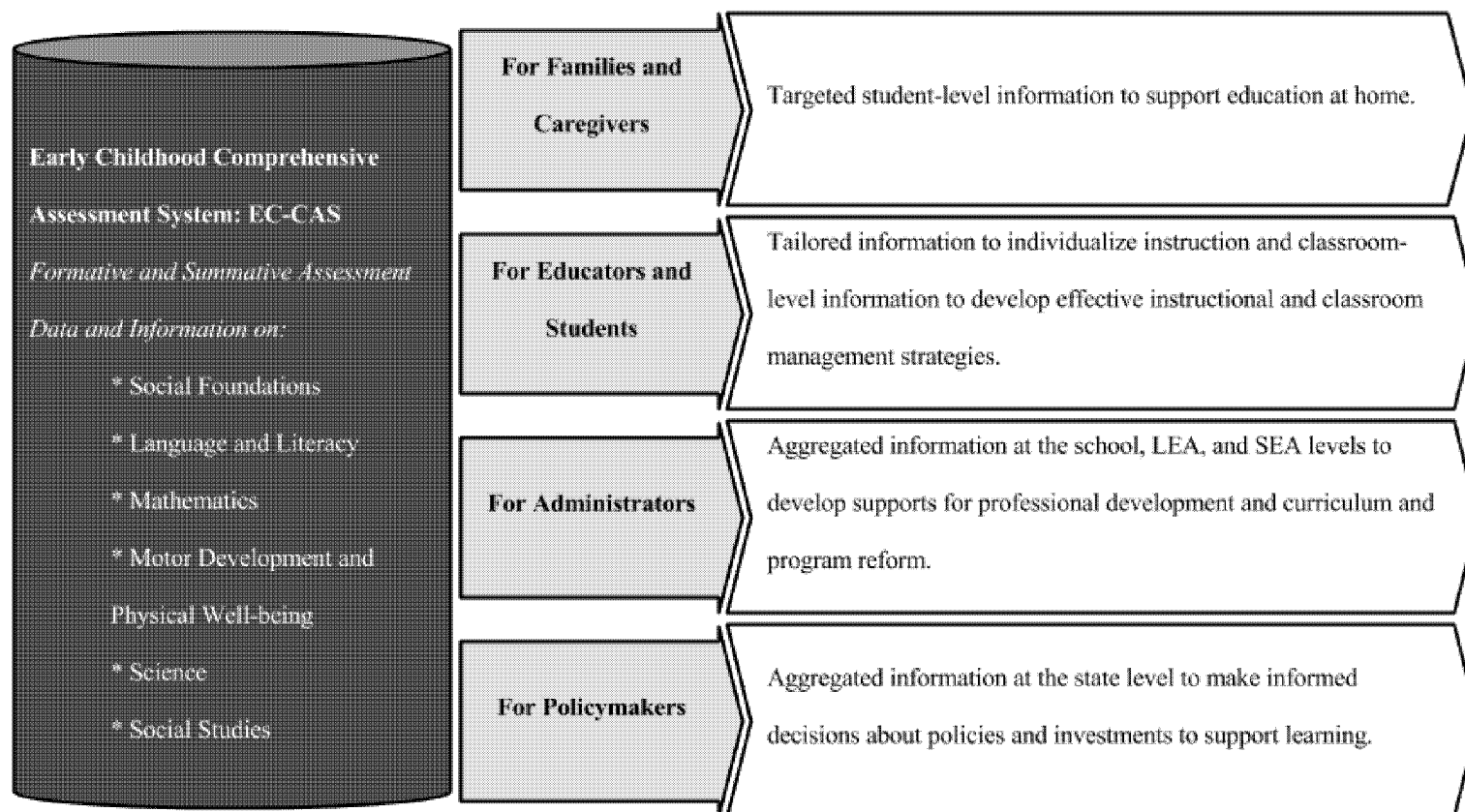
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Project Overview

The Consortium¹ has a compelling vision for enhancing a multi-state, state-of-the-art assessment system composed of a kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) and aligned formative assessments. This enhanced system—supported by expanded use of technology and targeted professional development—provides valid and reliable information on each child’s learning and development across the essential domains of school readiness, which will lead to better instruction, more informed decision-making, and reductions in achievement gaps over time. The Consortium recognizes that achieving this vision will be challenging, requiring high levels of commitment, technical expertise, collaboration across member States and partners, and strong management skills, systems, and supports.

Building on a highly successful existing effort already underway between Maryland and Ohio, the proposed system greatly expands the use of technology for more authentic and compelling items and tasks; efficiency of administration, scoring, and reporting; and increased student motivation. The end result will be a more reliable and valid system that provides timely, actionable data to identify individual student and program strengths and weaknesses, drive instruction, support curricular reform, and inform all stakeholders in the system about the effectiveness of preschool and kindergarten programs. The figure on page 3 shows the information that the assessment system provides for all end users.

¹ “The Consortium” refers to an alliance of States—including Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, and Ohio, with Maryland serving as the fiscal agent—and three prominent educational research and development organizations: WestEd (Assessment & Standards Development Services [ASDS] and Center for Child & Family Studies programs), the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE), and the University of Connecticut’s Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Program.



Background Information on the Development of EC-CAS 1.0—On December 16, 2011, Maryland and Ohio were each awarded Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Grants for four years. These grants support an innovative partnership to revise and enhance Maryland’s and Ohio’s kindergarten entry assessments and develop preschool and kindergarten formative assessments for children ages 36 to 72 months. These partnership efforts will culminate in a new Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System (EC-CAS), including a KEA and formative assessments, supported by a statewide technology infrastructure, and a professional-development system. In the context of this proposal, the existing EC-CAS and KEA will be referred to as version 1.0; the proposed enhanced EC-CAS and KEA will be referred to as version 2.0. The development of the EC-CAS 1.0, conducted under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Maryland serving as the fiscal agent, is currently in its second year, and KEA 1.0 is slated for field testing in November 2013, with statewide implementation in both Maryland and Ohio in the 2014–15 school year.

A number of partners are playing a vital role in executing Maryland and Ohio’s shared vision for improving kindergarten readiness and early childhood assessments. These partners include the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE), WestEd (including the agency’s Assessment & Standards Development Services program and the Center for Child & Family Studies), State advisory councils in each Consortium State, and a national Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), facilitated by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), advising both States.

Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System 1.0 (EC-CAS 1.0)—Maryland and Ohio are committed to developing the EC-CAS for all children from preschool through kindergarten, and to a statewide implementation of the system in 2014–15. The assessment components of the EC-CAS are:

- aligned to both States’ guidelines or standards for young children from birth through kindergarten;
- designed to assess children in seven developmental domains, including Social Foundations (approaches toward learning, executive functioning, and social and emotional development),

Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Motor Development and Physical Well-being, Science, Social Studies, and (in Maryland only) The Arts;

- linked to State longitudinal data systems, to allow for consistent and meaningful reporting at the student, class, school, district, and state levels;
- designed to be maximally accessible to young children with a wide range of background experiences and developmental needs;
- systematically developed and field tested within a framework grounded in theory, research, and best practice, to ensure its validity and reliability; and
- reviewed by a national TAC composed of developmental psychologists, early childhood content and assessment experts from fields including child psychology and measurement, and experts on young, diverse student populations (e.g., English language learners and students with disabilities).

The EC-CAS includes a kindergarten entry assessment (targeted at children aged 66 months) and (for children aged 36 through 72 months) formative assessments. Combined, these two assessment components provide key stakeholders—families/caregivers, educators, administrators, and policymakers—with a balanced view of students’ learning needs and provide actionable information to help tailor instruction and interventions.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment 1.0 (KEA 1.0)—KEA 1.0 is the cornerstone of the assessment system. The KEA blueprint includes assessment standards within each domain of learning or development; alignment with early learning and development standards, including the States’ kindergarten standards; and three types of assessment approaches, measuring essential skills and knowledge of incoming kindergarteners in age-appropriate, reliable, and valid formats. Once KEA 1.0 is fully operational in 2014–15, the data will be used to inform early-childhood education and care stakeholders, guide decision-making about professional-development needs, and assist teachers in data-driven instructional decision-making to meet each student’s individual needs.

Formative Assessments—Formative tools are being developed to monitor children’s progress on a continuum of typical development along critical learning progressions, which define the knowledge and skills that are typically developed over time for children ages 36 months through 72 months. These formative assessments will equip families, caregivers, and teachers to track individual children’s learning trajectories; individualize learning opportunities and plan for interventions; engage in real-time curriculum planning; and ensure that children are on a path to kindergarten readiness and beyond.

Response to Selection Criteria

(a) Theory of Action

(1) The Consortium is committed to the enhancement of EC-CAS 1.0 in order to provide a meaningful, comprehensive early childhood assessment system that provides meaningful results to a range of stakeholders. Within this system, the purpose of the KEA is to provide information to stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels about how well prepared children are for kindergarten. This will be accomplished in two ways:

- Use of KEA information at the individual student level—Families, caregivers, and kindergarten teachers will learn about each student’s skills, learning, and developmental needs, so that they can identify strengths and weaknesses for each student, resulting in individualized plans to inform instruction and any necessary interventions.
- Use of KEA information at student group and subgroup levels—School, local district, and State leaders will learn about students’ levels of preparedness and readiness for kindergarten (i.e., school), which will enable programmatic decision-making at the school, district, and state levels. Score information by domain, and overall readiness, will be summarized by demographic characteristics, in order to pinpoint where there are achievement gaps upon kindergarten entry, how children’s prior education and care experiences impacted readiness, and where to target

resources to better support identified at-risk children through academic, health, and behavioral supports and interventions. By making aggregated assessment reports available in the online reporting system (ORS) at the student, classroom, school, and district levels, and facilitating the integration of the KEA results into longitudinal data systems at the state level, the KEA can inform these policy, research, and educational decisions.

The purposes of the KEA are complemented by the purposes of the formative assessments:

- to monitor children’s progress along a continuum of typical child development across six domains of learning (seven if assessing The Arts), as facilitated by 28 learning progressions (32 if assessing The Arts), from 36 to 72 months; and
- to determine if a child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Support Plan (IFSP) has demonstrated improved (1) social-emotional skills; (2) acquisition of knowledge and skills; and (3) use of appropriate adaptive behaviors to meet his or her needs.

The relationship between the formative assessments and KEA 2.0 is illustrated in the following chart.

Both the formative assessments and KEA 2.0 are based on six domains of learning and development (seven if assessing The Arts). The formative assessments are based on the learning progressions within the age range of 36 to 72 months, and KEA 2.0 serves as the summative “snapshot” of kindergarten (i.e., school) readiness at roughly 66 months. The chart further illustrates how the KEA is part of a larger early-childhood assessment system, from preschool through kindergarten, the components of which serve as key milestones within States’ preschool–through–grade 12 statewide assessment systems. KEA 2.0 will allow for expectations to be aligned and student progress to be tracked from the end of the EC-CAS, at 72 months, through grade 3—when students begin taking either the PARCC or Smarter Balanced assessments or others equally aligned to rigorous college/career readiness standards—and beyond.

Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System

Domains	36 mo.	42 mo.	48 mo.	54 mo.	60 mo.	66 mo.	72 mo.	Grade 3
Social Foundations	Formative Assessments <i>Development represents a continuum of changing behaviors</i>					KEA <i>Summative “snapshot” of readiness</i>	Formative Assessments	
Language and Literacy								College and
Mathematics								Career
Motor Development and Physical Well-being								Readiness
Science								
Social Studies								
The Arts (MD only)								

(2) The KEA and the formative assessments are part of an overall educational system that includes early learning and development standards, curricular resources and instructional practices, professional development, and instructional interventions and policy improvements, all designed to enhance the school-readiness skills of entering kindergarten students and ensure that students are on a learning trajectory to graduate from high school ready for college and careers. Each of these components of the system is considered in the following sections.

Early Learning and Development Standards—Critical to the establishment of the Consortium is commonality of the States’ early learning and development standards. Although all participating States have adopted rigorous college and career readiness standards, each State has also individually developed early learning and development standards that vary from those of other Consortium States. Close alignment among them can be found in the Language and Literacy and Mathematics domains, but the other areas vary in scope, content, and expression. Maryland and Ohio faced this issue when they

embarked on developing EC-CAS 1.0 as part of their RTT-ELC Grant. Agreement was reached when the nexus of the problem was defined not as identical standards but as common standards, in terms of scope and content, for the most critical learning progressions. As a consequence, the Common Language Standards (CLS) were developed to define the specific content that was to form the basis of the KEA and the formative assessments. The CLS are aligned to the individual State standards and provide common definitions for the scope and content to be assessed. This approach led to agreement on standards for Maryland and Ohio that are substantially identical; the Consortium is confident that a similar approach will assure that the standards across all Consortium States meet the same expectation of commonality.

The following table provides an overview of the domains, strands, and learning progressions included in EC-CAS 1.0, as expressed in the CLS². States that joined the Consortium reviewed the CLS to determine whether their State's early learning and development standards are compatible with the CLS and reflect a meaningful sampling of the State's standards for kindergarten entry.

Domains, Strands, and Learning Progressions Included in EC-CAS 1.0

Domain	Strands	Learning Progressions
Social Foundations	Social Emotional Approaches to Learning and Executive Functioning	Awareness and Expression of Emotion Relationship with Adults Conflict Resolution Self-Control Persistence

² The learning progressions for the Arts domain are currently in development. For EC-CAS 1.0, Maryland opted to assess this domain, and Ohio did not; the other States in the Consortium have yet to make a decision about the assessment of this domain. All other domains reflect learning progressions that are aligned with the early learning standards of the Consortium States.

Domain	Strands	Learning Progressions
		Working Memory Problem Solving Initiative Cooperation with Peers
Language and Literacy	Reading Speaking and Listening Writing Language	Story/Text Comprehension Phonological Awareness Phonics and Letter Recognition Communication Emergent Writing Grammar Vocabulary
Mathematics	Counting and Cardinality Operations and Algebraic Thinking Measurement and Data Geometry	Number Sense Number Operations Classification Measurement Shapes
Motor Development and Physical Well-being	Physical Education Health	Coordination—Large Motor Coordination—Small Motor Safety and Injury Prevention Personal Care Tasks
Science	Skills and Processes/Life Science	Inquiry and Observation
Social Studies	Government History	Responsible Behavior Events in the Context of Time

Domain	Strands	Learning Progressions
The Arts (MD only)	Music Visual Arts Theater Dance	Music Visual Arts Theater Dance

Curricular Resources and Instructional Practices—Preschool and kindergarten teachers need the tools to implement curriculum and instructional practices based on early learning and development standards. Maryland and Ohio have established processes—including adding requirements to the States’ tiered quality rating and improvement systems—by which published preschool curricula and instructional practices must be aligned with each State’s early learning and developments standards. Such practices will be reviewed by all States in the Consortium to ensure that the available instructional resources are known and utilized.

Professional Development for Teachers—Recognizing the critical role of effective professional development to support real reform, the proposed assessment system calls for professional development for educators in three key areas: pre-administration, administration of the assessment with fidelity, and post-administration analysis and use of assessment data.

The professional-development sessions will be provided to educators using a variety of methods, including face-to-face, online, communities of practice, and discussion groups. A system of regional professional-development providers, situated within and funded by each State, will facilitate the training and supports needed for educators. In addition, each State will tie the KEA and the importance of using assessment information into other professional development that focuses on standards and learning supports. As the technology applications are expanded with the development of EC-CAS 2.0, professional-development opportunities will be expanded to include support for systematic progress

monitoring, enhanced accommodations through the use of technology, and tailored professional development based on specific State needs and identified needs from the implementation of EC-CAS 1.0.

(3) *Instructional Interventions and Policy Improvements*—The educational system, with its elements of standards, curriculum, professional development, instruction, and assessment, strengthens support for teachers as they prepare young children for the important transition into a new learning environment. It is critical that such a system remains responsive to each individual learner. Without formative assessments and the KEA, the responsiveness of teachers is impaired, and a systemic approach to addressing learning difficulties or specific learning styles is not possible. A KEA embedded in formative assessments, progress monitoring, and individualized instruction allows opportunities for teachers to improve each student’s foundational skills and eradicate school readiness gaps among students. The KEA results provide information on groups and subgroups of children, identify early opportunity gaps before children come to school, and strengthen accountability among early-childhood education providers and curriculum and program developers. In addition, by incorporating the formative assessments and the KEA into their broader preschool–through–grade 12 assessment and longitudinal data systems, States are able to understand relationships between kindergarten readiness and assessment results in grade 3 and beyond, in order to inform overall college and career readiness.

(d) Research and Evaluation

(1) The proposed technology-enhanced assessment system is highly innovative, creating challenges for both users and researchers. This section describes a series of analyses and studies designed to inform each phase of development and to ensure that both the KEA and aligned formative components of the assessment system are valid, reliable, and able to meet their ambitious goals and claims and reflect the recommendations of the National Research Council. Consequential validity studies will also be included, to determine whether the assessments are being implemented as designed and whether the theory of action is being realized, including whether the intended effects on individuals and institutions are being achieved.

The Joint Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999)

function as the predominant basis for the evaluation of educational assessment programs by the measurement community. The Standards “provide criteria for the evaluation of tests, testing practices, and the effects of test use” (p. 2) by addressing issues related to test construction and documentation, test fairness, and applications of testing across disciplines. Further, the U.S. Department of Education’s Peer Review Guidance for Evaluating Evidence of Final Assessments under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1999) specifically recommends that States use the Standards to document the technical quality of large-scale assessments. In the Standards, validity is defined as the “degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed uses of tests” (p. 9). The interrelationships among the interpretations and proposed uses of test scores and the sources of validity evidence define the validity argument for an assessment. The evaluation of scores from multiple sources of evidence forms the foundation of what is referred to as the unitary conceptualization of validity (Kane, 2006); this perspective will form the foundation for the validation of KEA 2.0.

Evidence Based on Test Content—The foundation of EC-CAS 1.0 is the CLS, which are based on the Maryland and Ohio standards for preschool and kindergarten. These standards address Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Motor Development and Physical Well-being, Science, Social Studies, and (currently in Maryland only) The Arts. Each charter State in the Consortium has committed to adopting, no later than the 2016–17 academic year, essential skills and knowledge that are based on each State’s standards and that align with the CLS.

Test construction is at the heart of instrument validation. Alignment and accessibility will be the major considerations in the selection of content for KEA 2.0. Educators of students with disabilities and English language learners will play an active role in item development and review in both the pilot and field-test phases. All items will undergo a bias (fairness) review to address cultural stereotyping, item-irrelevant characteristics that may render student groups at an advantage or disadvantage, sensitive topics,

and offensive language. The development, training, and review processes, including those involving State committees, are outlined in the following sections (*h*) and (*i*).

Validity evidence based on test content will include:

- alignment reports from charter Consortium States, to demonstrate the consistency between individual State standards and the KEA 2.0 blueprint (Consortium standards);
- alignment reports that demonstrate alignment with kindergarten and grade 1 standards (where applicable);
- review and revision of the test specifications by the Consortium TAC;
- review of item writer and editor training protocols; and
- an empirical survey of a representative sample of preschool and kindergarten teachers in each State, to demonstrate the depth of instruction on and relative importance of the Consortium standards. Samples will be constructed to represent diversity in student populations, geography, and program types.

Evidence Based on Internal Structure—All evidence based on internal structure will be drawn from the 2015 KEA 2.0 field test. The design of KEA 2.0 will incorporate multiple measures, including guided recorded observation, performance tasks, developmental rubrics, and selected-response items.

Statistical analyses of the selected-response items will include the following:

- the proportion of students selecting each option for each item;
- analyses based on the total raw score of the set of items and the proportions of upper, middle, and lower percentages of students selecting each option;
- the difficulty of each item (*p*-value and delta);
- the discrimination of each item (biserial and point-biserial);
- IRT difficulty and discrimination indices;
- discrimination indices for each option for each item;
- differential item functioning (DIF); and

- internal consistency estimates of reliability for the set of items.

Statistical analyses for the performance tasks and observational data will include:

- the proportion of students at each score point;
- based on the total raw score of the set of items, the proportion of upper, middle, and lower scores by score point; and
- measures of central tendency for the total score for each set of items.

Standard internal-consistency measures of reliability will be conducted on the selected-response items at the subscore and total-score levels. Generalizability theory will be used to quantify the proportion of variance in scores on the performance tasks that is attributable to the measurement procedures (to be defined further during the instrument development process). Reliability estimates will be reported at the State level and the Consortium level.

Reliability will also be addressed through the subgroup-level analysis of KEA 2.0 data. Descriptive data for the individual items and raw scores will be presented by student demographic subgroup as additional evidence of test fairness. Reliability evidence will also include bias and sensitivity review of the test content and assessment, as well as DIF analyses. Dimensionality of the set of items will be evaluated using factor analysis and structural equation modeling. It is expected that field-test items will maintain the structure of domains of early learning and development that was used to design KEA 2.0.

Interrater reliability is an important consideration for the KEA. Reliability is a key component of the online professional development offered to teachers. See section (e) for details on the professional development and training that all administrators and scorers will receive.

Evidence Based on Response Processes—Evidence based on response processes is particularly relevant to the development of KEA 2.0. First, a key component of KEA 2.0 is direct response data from kindergarten students online at the start of the kindergarten year. Detailed evidence that these young students are capable of critically analyzing prompts and selecting appropriate responses is critical to the validity of the KEA. Evidence based on response processes can contribute to questions about differences

in scores among subgroups of students. Cognitive labs will be set up in order to explore students' thought processes when completing the items. The cognitive labs are particularly critical for ensuring that the selected-response items are accessible to a wide range of students at various levels of development, as well as to students with disabilities and English language learners. Item accessibility includes comprehension of the item stem, as well as the ability to store the item stem in the working memory, search the memory store for information relevant to the item stem, and review the response options. Methodologies and results for these studies will be reviewed with the KEA 2.0 TAC, and items will be revised accordingly.

Rubric-based observations and performance tasks are also at the foundation of the KEA and the larger assessment system. It is critical to the success of the program to understand whether rubrics and rating scales are applied to student performances, skills, and behaviors as intended. Evidence based on response processes can serve as reliability evidence. In the pilot phase of development, questionnaires and cognitive labs will be used to explore the fit between the skill being measured and the performance or observation rating elicited from the student or teacher. All teachers who participate in the KEA 2.0 pilot will be asked to complete a survey to evaluate the accessibility of the items and the feasibility of the administration. A similar survey was administered to teachers during KEA 1.0 development.

External Validity: Evidence Based on Relationships to Other Variables—Validity evidence should include the relationships between the assessment instrument (i.e., the KEA and the formative assessments) and other variables and outcomes. Such evidence considers the relationship of the test to measures of the skill or behavior that it is intended to predict, similar measures of the same construct or different constructs, or studies of group differences as they apply to the proposed test interpretations. These other measures may be administered at the same time as KEA 2.0 (concurrent validity) or may be used to predict later performance (predictive validity). Though this development project will end at the census administration of the instrument across seven States in 2016, the following studies are recommended to States for incorporation into a longer-term sustainability plan for KEA 2.0:

- correlation between a student's raw score on the KEA and measures of progress on the EC-CAS formative assessments;
- correlation between scores on the KEA and other multidimensional (e.g., Teaching Strategies GOLD, the Early Development Instrument, Mullen Scales of Early Learning) and unidimensional (e.g., DIBELS, DIBELS Math, PPVT-4, Ages and Stages Questionnaire) measures of learning and development designed for young children;
- for Maryland and Ohio, school-level correlations between KEA 1.0 and KEA 2.0;
- student-level quantitative analyses of the association between scores on KEA 2.0 in 2016 and scores on grade 3 PARCC/Smarter Balanced assessments (as the cohorts advance to grade 3);
- examination of distribution of KEA scores by English language learner status, identification for special education services, and/or kindergarten retention; and
- examination of distribution of KEA scores by demographic variables, school/district resources, disability categories, and communication abilities.

(2) *External Validity: Evidence Based on Test Consequences*—The proposed plan to determine whether the assessments are being implemented as designed focuses on the role that the KEA and the formative assessments play in the larger context of improved outcomes for students and schools. Evidence based on testing consequences concerns examination of whether the intended benefits of the testing program are being realized in the educational system and the extent to which unintended negative consequences are minimized. Although the collection of evidence based on test consequences is critical to the success of the overall EC-CAS, as well as to the validation of the use of KEA 2.0 data, it falls outside the scope of this grant. However, the assessment system can be used to collect baseline data against which future outcomes can be compared.

Collection of validity evidence based on test consequences will begin immediately following the census administration in October 2016. This evidence will include:

- continued administration of the empirical survey of the depth of instruction on and relative importance of the standards to a representative sample of preschool teachers in each State;
- teacher/administrator surveys and focus groups focused on data use;
- surveys and focus groups for families, focused on the assessment purpose and data use;
- continued cognitive labs with English language learners and students with disabilities; and
- longitudinal analyses of KEA scores to show growth over time, by subgroup and in the aggregate.

(e) Professional Capacity and Outreach

(1) In EC-CAS 1.0, a train-the-trainer model is being used in order to support large-scale training efforts. Prior to training teachers, State-approved trainers complete a two-module, face-to-face training on delivering EC-CAS training to local practitioners in both online and face-to-face formats, including the required training for how to administer the assessment. These State-approved trainers must have specific prerequisite skills and knowledge, including knowledge of assessment of young children and strategies for teaching adult learners, in order to participate in the train-the-trainer training session. Online professional learning modules and resources are offered to these trainers to build their capacities. In addition, the State-approved trainers must successfully complete the EC-CAS administration training and pass the reliability qualifications. As part of their responsibilities, the State-approved trainers also provide immediate, post-training support to teachers and providers. Trainers use an online learning community for communications and resource exchange. Webinars are also used to communicate with teachers and administrators about the assessments prior to the summative assessment window.

In focus groups conducted early on in EC-CAS 1.0, teachers and State trainers communicated the need for ongoing support beyond their formal training experiences. JHU CTE worked within the different State structures to identify potential local resources who can provide this support. Technical assistance providers, local resources who provide timely, direct, and ongoing coaching and support to practitioners, were identified to serve as a point of contact for questions related to assessment implementation, data

analysis, and instructional planning. These providers maintain frequent contact with practitioners, to support fidelity of implementation of the assessment and improved instructional practice.

Technical assistance providers, along with the colleagues they will coach, also complete training on administering the assessment and must fulfill the same reliability qualifications. Prior to assessment training, they are also provided with training in coaching methods that align to the International Coaching Federation's Professional Coaching Core Competencies (1998).

The Consortium plans to implement a similar comprehensive approach to professional development for EC-CAS 2.0. This approach will provide face-to-face and online training for various audiences and will also include ongoing coaching and support by local resources through a communities-of-practice model. The enhanced professional-development approach will expand the current approach and will provide an individualized collection of learning experiences in multiple formats, including ongoing, tiered support for professionals with varying levels of experience in child assessment and across different educational settings. The range of professional-development activities will be designed to develop skills in collecting, interpreting, and using data among school and program leaders, teachers, and families, and to support the development of research-based tools and resources that address emerging needs.

Following best-practice guidelines from the National Research Council (2008), planned professional development activities will be organized around three stages of assessment, as described below:

- Pre-administration—Professional development related to pre-administration will focus on ensuring that users understand the purpose of the various assessment tools, are thoroughly knowledgeable about issues related to data security and integrity, and know how to communicate effectively with families and other stakeholders about the purposes and results of the assessments.
- Administration of assessments—Professional development related to administration of the assessments will increase understanding of the processes and procedures for each type of assessment instrument, afford opportunities for hands-on use of assessment tools and associated resources, promote understanding of accommodations and adaptations for various at-risk

populations, build the skills needed to interpret and score children’s responses to multiple item types, introduce participants to the data collection and reporting system, and offer opportunities for hands-on use of the system.

- Post-administration analysis and use of data—A third set of professional-development offerings will focus on the post-administration analysis and use of data. These materials will focus on increasing teachers’ understanding of assessment scores, communicating assessment results to families and caregivers, utilizing data to make instructional decisions and tailoring instruction, and providing additional information on data quality and integrity.

Validation by Simulation—The Consortium believes it is imperative that teachers, as assessors, be properly trained to score assessment items with reliability. Training for administration of the assessment will include assessment administration protocols, guidelines for supports for children with disabilities and English language learners, and practice with scoring procedures. Upon completion of the assessment administration training, all teachers and providers will be required to qualify for scoring through the successful completion of a simulation. The simulation, accessed through the web, will provide hands-on experience and practice in administering assessments and analyzing data for instructional improvement. The simulation will be used to enhance the interrater agreement as the basis for the assessor certification process.

Online Learning Community—KEA 2.0 will use an electronic learning community, a password-protected, user-friendly online environment that supports collaboration, content delivery, and file sharing for teachers and administrators throughout the assessment process. The community site will be customizable to include separate communities for different audiences or space to share information and resources across audiences. In addition, it will include a repository of state-developed and state-vetted resources (e.g., web-based learning modules and tutorials) for improving professional skills and practices, and a forum for sharing knowledge, insights, and observations. Examples of resources and online

activities include recommended readings, focus-group discussions, and sharing of annotated examples of best practices and exercises to help educators develop expertise within the context of local practice.

Personalization of PD Content Based on Teacher and Student Needs—With this enhanced professional-development approach, teachers will receive personalized professional development to meet their learning needs (as identified by self-evaluation as well as through the tracking of their students' assessment data). Each teacher will have a unique profile, which may include their type of program, setting (e.g., rural, suburban, urban), and/or class size. In addition to completing the core professional-development training required by the State, teachers will be provided with specific recommendations for professional development based on factors such as needs for retraining, supporting special populations (e.g., students with disabilities and English language learners), and domain-specific teaching strategies to target specific student needs. Strands of professional-development offerings, which include formal professional credits for teacher recertification purposes, will be extended to all States participating in the Consortium.

Enhanced Scalability—EC-CAS 2.0 will include advanced verification of professional-development completion and tracking features for teacher certification. This will accommodate a significant increase in the number of teachers using the system and will improve the efficiency of documentation of completion of online professional development. These enhanced features will also allow for better tracking of module completion and data collection based on program characteristics or other data points, as prioritized by the participating States.

Instructional Resources Based on Student Data—The Consortium realizes the importance of finding the right level of instruction and support to ensure that every student can progress. The current supports embedded within EC-CAS 1.0 will be expanded to include a bank of evidence-based activities and intervention strategies that support the current developmental learning progressions and provide linkages to local school curricula that are aligned to each State's standards. These activities and strategies will assist teachers in planning tailored instruction to meet the developmental needs of individual students and

groups of students, based on the assessment data. Teachers will be able to interact with instructional planning features to help apply Universal Design principles and identify activities that can be easily, seamlessly integrated into a teacher’s typical day.

Additionally, a process for examining student assessment data will be integrated into the online professional-development system. JHU CTE’s approach to data-informed decision-making, TAP-IT, will be utilized to guide novice and experienced educators through a structured examination of data and inquiry to improve student outcomes and professional practice. Special educators and administrators working with kindergarten students will also play a key role in interpreting student data and supporting teachers to make instructional decisions. To assist in this role, administrators—particularly those who do not have an early-childhood educational background—will be provided with their own professional-development resources.

Learning Community Connections and Collaboration— Recent survey and focus-group data collected from participating teachers in EC-CAS 1.0 indicated frequent usage of, high comfort level with, and overall interest in social-media tools such as Facebook or Pinterest, with significantly less interest in the more traditional online course format. Opportunities for teachers and administrators to share resources and collaborate to develop a shared knowledge base will be incorporated into EC-CAS 2.0 through an engaging professional learning community that integrates features of popular social-media tools. The enhanced learning community will incorporate features of social-networking services, in order for individuals to easily post, collect, and organize resources and ideas as well as to “follow” individuals and topics. The resources will be tagged and then recommended to individuals based on their personal profiles and their interests or needs. This community will harness the creativity of teachers by encouraging them to collaborate on the creation of professional resources, activities, and games, with the goal of supporting children’s development along the continuum. Communication tools such as threaded discussions, commenting features, and blog posts will allow community members, experts, and State agency

representatives to provide feedback on the resources and share their own adaptations. Individuals will be able to start or join groups to solve problems and collaborate at the local or state level.

Additionally, families will be able to access this community, which will provide them with expert advice, resources, and opportunities to promote learning and development at home. Families also will have the opportunity to provide input into specific areas of priority identified by the States and local communities. These enhancements to the professional-development system will allow for better, more efficient scalability to reach larger groups of teachers, administrators, and families, with increased flexibility to create personalized learning opportunities, higher levels of engagement in the learning community, and appropriate supports and interventions that are linked directly to student data.

(2) In EC-CAS 1.0, Maryland and Ohio work closely with their partners and key stakeholder groups to communicate clearly and consistently with community members, families, and policymakers, as well as with teachers, caregivers, and service providers. Communication currently takes place through a variety of means, including:

- the establishment of a governance structure that includes communication with state advisory committees, ad-hoc work groups, and a national TAC;
- presentations at state meetings for local stakeholders, including early-childhood special educators;
- presentations and communications with district and regional groups of administrators and teachers;
- communications, via email, in-person presentations, and webinars, with district and regional early-childhood supervisors, staff, and professional-development providers;
- communications, via email and presentations/meetings, with local technical-assistance centers and governmental agencies/officials; and
- communications, via reports and presentations, to the States' early-childhood advisory councils and business-community representatives.

For EC-CAS 2.0, this approach will be expanded to all States in the Consortium. It will be important for all stakeholders to remain informed throughout development, testing, and rollout of all aspects of the system. This will ensure that the purpose of each system component; the content standards it is intended to measure; how it was developed; to whom, when, and how it will be administered; who will score responses or rate performances; and how results will be interpreted, reported, and used are accurately articulated to constituents. Planned short- and long-term research agendas will also be communicated to stakeholders, in order to keep them apprised of system integrity and plans to monitor test-based consequences, both immediately and over time.

A publicly accessible web presence will inform and educate stakeholders at all levels with regard to the theoretical framework, educational goals, specific methodologies, implementation practices, technology usage, and data analytics that comprise the assessment system. Video demonstrations, sample assessment items, and a “frequently asked questions” page will be employed to generate awareness of and support for the program.

In addition, communication with State stakeholders will take various other forms, including presentations, formal reports, research briefs, and fact sheets, that will be available in hard copy and online. JHU CTE will work with the Consortium to ensure that each State has a communications strategy on the importance and value of the new assessment system. The goal of this collaboration will be to provide ongoing opportunities for learning about the system and how to use the information it yields to ensure that all children enter school with equal opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. The reporting system will provide both standard, paper-based reports and more technologically advanced, web-based data-analysis tools.

All States participating in the Consortium will be committed to transparency regarding all development and implementation plans, the purposes of each system component, and the intended outcomes of the system. Each State will implement an outreach and communications plan for informing and updating the public and key stakeholder groups. The system will include timely reporting of

assessment results and dissemination of resource materials, such as templates for presentations, brochures, pamphlets, information letters, newsletters, and notices about opportunities to support activities related to the system.

Other new resources that will be created for stakeholders include:

- Kindergarten readiness tool—An engaging and interactive online resource to educate families of young children about what kindergarten readiness means, with information specific to families of children entering kindergarten.
- What the data tell us—Content targeting legislators and policymakers, explaining assessment for young children and how to interpret results in the context of appropriate assessment practice.
- Virtual town-hall forums—Themed online webinar sessions to inform stakeholders about the assessment system, with creative ways to engage participants to gather support and input.
- Virtual performance assessment (VPA) demos—One or more demos for teachers and families to “play with” interactive activities that children will use in the assessment.

These processes and expanded resources will assist in communicating with the variety of stakeholders and Consortium members.

(f) Technology Approach

(1) Technology Approach for EC-CAS 1.0—Currently, in EC-CAS 1.0, the technology available for the KEA includes an online reporting system (ORS), teacher dashboards and customized professional development, and a virtual performance assessment (VPA).

The ORS provides secure access for teachers to enter student performance data and teacher observational data. Accessible via desktop computer, laptop, or tablet, the ORS allows for data import and export, including the transfer of data to longitudinal data systems. User dashboards and reports support state-, district-, school-, classroom, and student-level data reporting and analysis. Customizable views and reports can be created for families, teachers, and administrators at the school, district, or state levels.

Types of reportable data include:

- Assessment completion—the percentage of assessment items completed by individual students or by a whole class;
- Readiness performance—student performance on the KEA by domain at the individual student, class, district, or state levels, to inform broad readiness monitoring; and
- Formative item performance—student performance on the formative items, to inform instructional decision-making.

In addition, the ORS allows student artifacts to be uploaded and linked to a longitudinal profile for monitoring student performance over time. Nightly data transfers ensure that teachers and administrators at all levels are able to access real-time data as needed.

Teacher dashboards and customized professional development provide contextualized resources to support instruction and the use of best practices in the classroom. Data from the ORS generate information and recommendations for instructional groupings, as well as targeted instruction based on individual child and class performance. Suggested instructional activities are available for teachers to incorporate in daily lesson planning. Simulation software familiarizes teachers with assessment protocols and use of professional-development resources. The easily accessible system enables educators to monitor progress, make informed decisions, and promote continuous improvement in children’s knowledge and skills.

The VPA uses technology to provide child-friendly and engaging interaction with the assessment environment. Two assessment types are currently available:

- point-and-touch items that involve single-touch/click selection; and
- interactive activities for children to engage in and receive instructional feedback on during formative assessments.

The design of the VPA is age-appropriate and utilizes a guided system of navigation that guarantees that targeted skills are probed sufficiently. Regardless of a child’s performance, the virtual environment encourages, engages, and motivates children to interact with each activity.

Technology Approach for EC-CAS 2.0—Technology will be incorporated in a variety of ways in EC-CAS 2.0 to support the development of assessment items, the delivery of the assessment, the collection of scoring data, and the analysis and reporting of the assessment results. An overview of the application of technology by category of user follows.

- **Children**—Students will have access to direct-performance items, as appropriate for the assessment domain, to be completed using child-friendly technology for use on tablets or PCs. They will log in by selecting their name or picture (with support, as needed), and will then have access to the interactive formative items assigned by the teacher. The interactive items will be designed to be engaging and fun for children. The resulting scores will feed into a child’s profile without the need for the teacher to manually enter them. The direct-assessment items will be supported with audio and visual cues and accommodations where appropriate.
- **Teachers/assessors**—Teachers will access the system on a computer or tablet through secure, encrypted authentication. Upon entry, teachers will be presented with a dashboard that includes a listing of their students (by class) and the assessment completion status of each child and of the class as a whole. Teachers will be able to use mobile technology to document observational and performance-rubric data while observing their students’ actions and/or interactions. Score information obtained through these observations will be automatically fed into the ORS. Other functions of the system include the abilities to browse assessment items, access embedded professional-development resources, enter scoring data directly into the system, assign assessments for a student to complete, and upload a sample of work to a student’s profile. In addition, teachers will have access to a variety of score reports at the student and class levels, which will inform instructional strategies tailored to students’ needs.
- **Administrators (school, district, and state)**—Administrators will have access (based on their positions and data and reporting needs) to dashboards that support data-driven decision-making and reporting requirements. Reports will be available at the classroom, building, school, district,

regional, and state levels as designated by each State. The system will make data available to external systems as well, facilitating the capacity for longitudinal analysis across multiple relevant data systems. External stakeholders, such as early-childhood advisory councils, business leaders, legislators, and other key policymakers and decision-makers, will also have access to aggregated reports.

All of the proposed technology components described in this section will substantially benefit from existing systems and intellectual capital created under the current RTT-ELC Grant. The data and feedback from KEA 1.0 will provide the basis for significant enhancements and expanded functionality of these systems. Building upon existing systems will exponentially improve the efficiency of new development, because much of the analysis and conceptual development has already been carried out and documented. Additional funding and resources will be directly applied toward the construction of KEA 2.0, which will include numerous system enhancements, as described in the following sections.

Longitudinal Analysis—Dashboard capacity will be expanded to allow direct integration with other relevant data systems, providing enhanced support for longitudinal tracking, student progress monitoring, and student intervention monitoring at the state, local, school, and classroom levels.

Expansion of Interactive Assessments—KEA 2.0 will expand the capacity of the system to provide direct student assessment using child-friendly, touchscreen technologies. The amount of engaging, interactive content will be increased and improved upon, based on the feedback and results from KEA 1.0 testing and implementation. The system also will allow for auto-leveling of assessment difficulty based on student performance.

Charting Student Progress Over Time—The next generation of the KEA system will embed the JHU CTE Student Compass Tool. This tool will allow teachers to monitor children’s progress relative to defined performance indicators based on the KEA learning progressions; review interventions; and select the most appropriate intervention for addressing the identified need of the student.

Digital Portfolios—While KEA 1.0 includes the ability to attach digital artifacts (e.g., sample work, audio or video clips, teacher notes) to a student’s profile, KEA 2.0 will provide additional capacity that transforms this basic function into a digital portfolio that can be added to over time and accessed by families and the student’s future teachers. An expanded portfolio will support the concept of multiple measures and provide an additional means to assess students’ progress over time.

Enhanced Accessibility Features and Accommodations—KEA 2.0 will use the results of KEA 1.0 testing and implementation, teacher surveys, classroom observations, and recommendations from expert consultants to expand and improve upon the embedded accessibility features and accommodations of KEA 1.0. The enhanced system will continue adherence to Universal Design principles, and will utilize child-friendly technologies and strategies that are based on research and proven best practices for the instructional use of technology with young children.

Scaling Professional Development—KEA 2.0 will enhance the scalability of the professional development (online learning modules and embedded support) provided in KEA 1.0. Based on the results of student assessments, teachers will be presented with targeted online professional development and embedded supports, including interventions and activities that could be implemented in the classroom and promote individualized instruction.

Cloud Hosting and Scalability—Technology systems developed to support KEA 2.0 will require enhancements to an already robust cloud-hosting environment. The increase in the number of users across the Consortium States will require that additional resources be allocated to the cloud-based server environment, to improve scalability and load balancing. The States will benefit from the efficiency of the multi-state system architecture designed to support both Maryland and Ohio users in KEA 1.0, and will also benefit from cost efficiencies as a result of multiple States sharing in the ongoing cost of the system. KEA 2.0 will include sufficiently increased bandwidth, server capacity, and security controls to ensure that each collaborating State experiences strong application performance. Robust technical protocols, to ensure the security of student data, will also be revised and improved.

In order to promote cost-effective adoption by schools, cross-platform technical development strategies will be enhanced, and adherence to an open-licensed interoperability standard that is industry-recognized and approved by the U.S. Department of Education will be implemented. The Question and Test Interoperability (QTI) and Accessible Portable Item Profile (APIP) standards are examples of protocols that will be used to maximize interoperability. QTI and APIP incorporate key elements of established specifications to create an integrated system for an accessible and interoperable item-file format. The technology being developed under this grant is being built to achieve the expectations for interoperability to facilitate the transfer of information within and across states. Interoperable design will support (a) test-test content portability; (b) transfer of assessments from one technology platform to another; (c) consistent assessment delivery across the Consortium; (d) consistent application of accessibility features, including the universal design of items; and (e) construction of assessment databases that allow for long-term analysis and digital report dissemination across multiple platforms.

(2) *Potential Factors Limiting Adoption*—Both Maryland and Ohio include rural areas and regions of poverty, with schools and community-based early-childhood centers that possess limited technology capacity. During the conceptual development of KEA 1.0, this fact necessitated strategies to limit barriers to adoption as much as possible. At a minimum, participating schools will need a computer with Internet access in order to input assessment results into the system for reporting and analysis. However, the KEA can also be administered using printed materials and without the use of technology. For the foreseeable future, this approach will continue to be employed. To the extent possible, all technology components developed will also be supported across multiple computer platforms, browser versions, and touchscreen devices, to maximize the number of students who have access to the virtual performance assessments.

(g) Project Management

The Consortium recognizes that achieving its vision for this project will be challenging. Enhancing the EC-CAS, and the KEA in particular, will require high levels of commitment, technical expertise, collaboration, and, of most relevance for this section, strong management skills, systems, and supports.

Three major management components will provide for a timely delivery of EC-CAS 2.0 with strong safeguards of accountability: (1) the Consortium Executive Committee; (2) a Project Management Partner (PMP) to support the work of the Consortium; and (3) collaboration with national expert institutions to provide support and ongoing services beyond the grant period.

The Consortium States are committed to fully and equitably participating in the oversight and decision-making process regarding the scope of work and the implementation of EC-CAS 2.0. This collaboration is based on formal agreements (MOUs) among the States and is being implemented through the formation of an Executive Committee consisting of leadership representation from each State. The Consortium will establish a stringent communication protocol, including monthly leadership calls, semiannual planning meetings, and ongoing work groups. The project will be supported by individuals who will serve as leads in each State and as the facilitators for stakeholder input within each State. Within the Consortium, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will serve as the lead applicant and the fiscal and procurement agent.

WestEd's Assessment & Standards Development Services (ASDS) program will serve as the PMP for the Consortium, and will provide overall project management on its behalf. The PMP will be responsible for drafting the scope of work and detailed planning of activities and tasks with specified milestones and deliverables, and will work closely with MSDE, as the fiscal agent, to ensure that the project implementation stays within budget.

As partnering organizations to the Consortium, JHU CTE (assisting with technology and professional development) and the University of Connecticut's Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment program (assisting with research) will formally work closely with the PMP. In addition, CCSO will facilitate an annual meeting of the TAC, consisting of 12 national experts in child development and assessment.

Together, the Consortium and partnering organizations will ensure that the five project-management qualifications for this grant are met efficiently and effectively.

(I) A critical first step in supporting the Consortium's assessment development and implementation will be to develop a work plan that includes the high-level requirements for meeting major goals. This work plan will define the start-up processes, associated outcomes, and ongoing tasks that will ensure successful completion of each milestone task, as specified in the Scope of Work. An initial draft of the high-level project plan is included in Appendix A on page 65.

WestEd will be prepared to work immediately with the Consortium to develop detailed schedules for all system components. The final project plan, including detailed information about project milestones, will be developed and submitted to Consortium leadership for approval prior to the commencement of project activities, and no later than December 1, 2013. The final project plan will encompass the overall scope and schedule of the assessment system development. Any proposed changes to the project plan will be provided to the Executive Committee for approval. The project plan will be the prime source document that specifies the primary tasks, services, activities, schedule, and requirements for the contract. As such, it will be available to all partners, to ensure a common understanding of the project's scope, schedule, and context. To support this effort, Smartsheet.com, an online project planning and collaboration tool, will be used to assign and manage tasks, staffing, and other resources in order to ensure that all timelines are met. Staff can be strategically reassigned as needed to meet specific needs. Smartsheet.com has proven effective in helping WestEd manage other highly complex projects.

The PMP will plan, monitor, and report on the Consortium work as necessary to ensure successful development and implementation of the proposed work (e.g., the KEA, including technology and professional-development supports). This will help ensure that tasks are clearly communicated, roles and responsibilities are understood, schedules are followed, deadlines are met, potential risks are evaluated and managed proactively, and all work is completed within allocated budgets.

As PMP, WestEd will build on its existing processes and tools to effectively implement and maintain the project schedule/timeline; manage and support all Consortium meetings through collaboration on agenda development; document meeting discussions and decisions, and identify action items for follow-

up; and work to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in all system processes through continual review and improvement. The PMP will also apply proven strategies to oversee and facilitate work around critical design issues, coordinating the involvement of the TAC and other advisory councils at key junctures.

Throughout the duration of the contract, the PMP will monitor Consortium activities and track progress toward completion of key deliverables (on time and within budget); adapt plans to meet emerging project needs as activities unfold; ensure that roles and responsibilities are understood and that outcomes meet expectations; promote sustainability of the initiative through responsible planning, ongoing documentation, careful monitoring, and proven communication practices; and identify, manage, and mitigate risks.

(2) *Identification, Management, and Mitigation of Risk*—Successful project management requires a careful balance of time, resources, and quality. Further, understanding how system components interact during development and implementation will allow the PMP to anticipate potential risks and plan for contingencies. The primary risk management strategy will be to create comprehensive work plans as soon as possible, to ensure that sufficient time and resources are allocated to complete the KEA. Additionally, as part of the project schedule development process, the PMP will work with Consortium States to identify implementation barriers, risks, and possible solutions or mitigation strategies. The key to the success of a project of this complexity will be contingency planning from the outset. Three major levels of risk will be used to categorize and develop mitigation strategies:

- Program-level risk: Any potential issue identified that could jeopardize the overall success of the project. An example of this may be loss of funding to the level anticipated, or exit of several member States from the Consortium. Additionally, systemic risks, associated with a diverse and geographically distributed membership, that could result in delays in decision-making or miscommunications would qualify as program-level risks.
- Component-level risk: Any potential issue identified that could jeopardize the development or implementation of one of the Consortium's core assessment components. Risks at this level that

go without mitigation could potentially have an impact on other aspects of the project, given the high degree of interdependency in the various deliverables. It is especially important for the PMP and the Executive Committee to establish response plans for each risk considered to have a probability and impact on other aspects of the project that might extend beyond the component level.

- Deliverable-level risk: These risks would be managed within the project teams.

Response plans and mitigation strategies will be captured for risks at each of these levels.

Additionally, risks may be classified according to the various types of potential impact or domain: financial, schedule, technical, legal, quality, etc.

The Executive Committee, the MSDE grant manager, and the lead staff will work with the Consortium States to capture, identify, and classify the various risks that each of these bodies can anticipate, and will, with support from the PMP, establish appropriate mitigation strategies and response plans. Risks are potential issues; should a risk materialize without adequate containment of its impact, it will become an issue for escalation through processes established in the project management activities of the Consortium.

Monthly project management reports, including stoplight-status reports, will be shared with the MSDE grant manager and the Executive Committee. The stoplight-status reports will provide a high-level progress indicator for each core assessment component—indicating, for each assessment component, whether it is considered “green” (on schedule, with no anticipated risks), “yellow” (on schedule, with medium risk of moving off schedule), or “red” (off schedule, or on schedule with high risk of moving off schedule). Any variances from the anticipated schedule (i.e., yellow or red indicators) will be reported along with strategies for course correction, the estimated likelihood that corrective action will be effective, and possible mitigation strategies if course correction fails. As part of the project master plan development process, WestEd will work with the Executive Committee to identify implementation barriers, risks, and possible solutions or mitigation strategies.

Compliance Monitoring and Communication—MSDE, on behalf of the Consortium, will serve as the lead agency in ensuring compliance with federal statutes and limitations. It will consult regularly with the grant’s U.S. Department of Education program officer on the progress of the project and any anticipated changes that require amendments to the scope of work and project budgets.

Governance Support—The primary governing mechanism of the Consortium will be the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will be composed of one representative from each charter State in the Consortium. In addition to representing a charter State, each Executive Committee member must meet the following criteria:

- must have prior experience in either the design or the implementation of curriculum, standards, and/or assessment systems at the policy or implementation level; and
- must have a willingness to serve as the liaison to the full Consortium membership.

The responsibilities of the Executive Committee will be to:

- determine the broad picture of what the assessment system will look like;
- identify issues to be presented to the charter and/or advisory States;
- oversee the expenditure of funds in collaboration with MSDE;
- operationalize the plan to transition from the proposal governance to implementation governance; and
- evaluate and recommend successful contract proposals for approval by MSDE.

Decision-Making—Consensus will be a goal of all decisions. Major decisions that do not reach consensus must be passed with a 2/3 majority vote. Each charter State will have one vote. The Executive Committee will meet monthly throughout the grant period. Most meetings will be virtual; however, twice each year, the committee will meet in person. For efficiency and cost savings, these face-to-face meetings will be linked, if possible, to other events—e.g., conferences, TAC meetings—that Executive Committee members are likely to attend. The PMP, in consultation with the Executive Committee chair and the MSDE grant manager, will prepare agendas and supporting documents for each meeting, make webinar or

facility/travel arrangements, document all decisions, and prepare and disseminate draft and approved minutes.

(3) The Consortium is fully confident that the submitted budget is adequate for the development and validation of the KEA, as well as for the development of the technology necessary to administer the assessment and report its results. The Consortium also fully believes that the submitted budget will allow for the development of a state-of-the-art set of supports, including professional-development modules designed to assist teachers to prepare students to take the assessment; administer and score the various components; and interpret reports and use information to inform instruction. This confidence is bolstered by WestEd's very recent experience with the development of KEA 1.0 and other, similar assessment development projects at the state and local levels.

The budget associated with each activity leverages the previous work on KEA 1.0, and focuses on project deliverables (e.g., item/task development, score reports, professional development), with management costs linked directly to these activities for the enhancement of KEA 2.0. Most Consortium management and assessment development meetings will be virtual. Because many of the costs related to this work are fixed (i.e., independent of the number of States in the Consortium) and others increase based on the number of States in the Consortium, the Consortium's ability to attract seven States (intermediate level for this grant competition) creates a perfect balance between efficiency and complexity.

(4) Commitment and sustainability planning by member States are essential to the success of the Consortium's efforts. Per the signed MOUs, each State that is a member of the Consortium agrees to do the following:

- adopt and fully implement, statewide, the common KEA no later than December 31, 2017;
- adopt a set of essential skills and knowledge that are based on early learning and development standards, and that are substantially identical across all Consortium States, no later than the 2016–17 school year;
- adhere to the Consortium governance as outlined in the MOU;

- agree to support the decisions of the Consortium;
- agree to follow agreed-upon timelines; and
- be willing to participate in the decision-making process and, if a charter State, final decisions.

While costs will differ, to a degree, from State to State, due to State-specific factors and factors related to agreements with potential implementation vendors, WestEd estimates that the per-pupil cost to administer, score, and report KEA 2.0 is about \$4 per student. This estimate is based on current experience administering similar assessments and Maryland's and Ohio's experience in pilot testing KEA 1.0. It also involves a comparison to cost estimates of the much more complex PARCC and Smarter Balanced assessment systems. The KEA estimate is based on the following assumptions:

- The grant will bear the cost of item and task development, and of the administration, data collection, and scoring technology applications;
- Scoring will be performed onsite by the assessment administrator or designee;
- Professional development and training to administer the assessment will be virtual; and
- All reports will be electronic (no printing required).

The cost of technology to administer the assessment is not included in this estimate. WestEd assumes that local education agencies and service providers will be investing in technology as part of their instructional responsibilities and their readiness for PARCC and Smarter Balanced, and that this technology will be available for the KEA. For those agencies and service providers that do not have access to sufficient technology, a paper version of the KEA will be provided, with costs assumed by the agency or service provider. Also not included in this estimate are costs related to hosting the professional-development materials, technology-supported items, and the ORS. These costs will also differ from State to State, depending on the number of students enrolled in kindergarten in the State and other system-readiness issues.

(5) The team proposed to manage this grant is knowledgeable, experienced, and familiar with collaborating on a project of this size and scope. For the past several years, the core team has successfully

built KEA 1.0 and its associated products and services. The Leadership Team currently utilized in EC-CAS 1.0—composed of member representatives from MSDE, the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Ohio Governor’s Office, JHU CTE, and WestEd; State advisory councils; a 12-member TAC; and ad hoc committees and work groups from each State—will be expanded to include members from charter States in the Consortium, to be named the Executive Committee. Each State will also establish a State advisory council, composed of stakeholders similar to those currently in Maryland and Ohio. This group will continue its work and will include additional talent to meet the specifications for this grant.

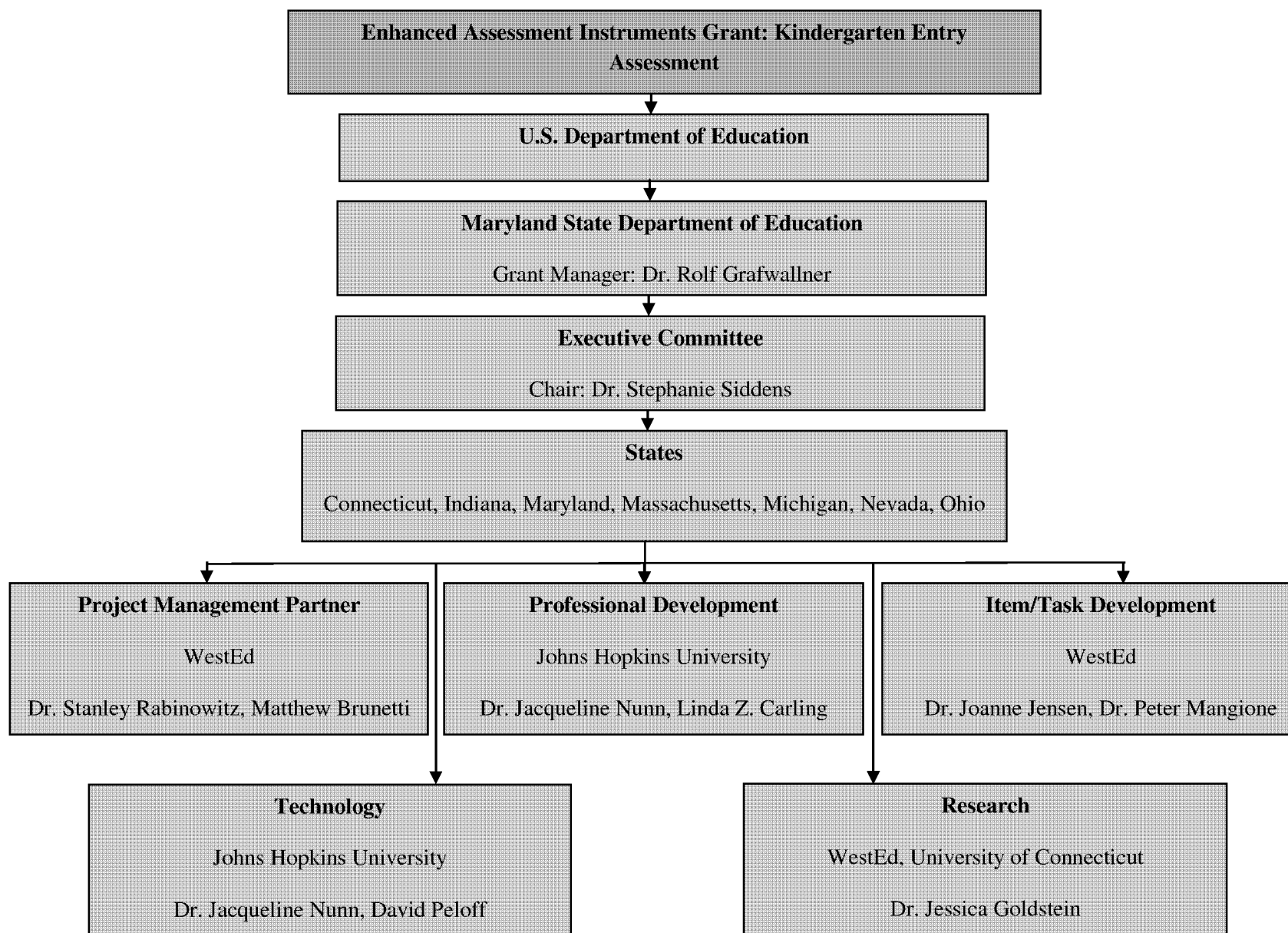
WestEd’s current role as a partner in Maryland and Ohio’s RTT-ELC assessment development process brings a critical, intimate, and advantageous quality to its proposed role as PMP for the development of EC-CAS 2.0. More broadly, WestEd has demonstrated high-quality management support as the PMP of the more complex Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. For EC-CAS 2.0, WestEd will work within the Consortium governance structure to establish protocols that meet baseline expectations; plan for translating project scope into action; describe inputs and outputs; establish standards for performance; apply lessons learned; use information formatively to improve internal processes; and document action items and resolutions on a deliverable-by-deliverable basis.

The Consortium and its partnering organizations understand the importance of alignment and coordination among all system features and are committed to utilizing best practices in project management to meet the objectives of the proposed project across the following principles of project management:

- Time—As PMP, WestEd will assume responsibility for setting and monitoring the sequence of events and duration for each activity; tracking, reviewing, regulating, and monitoring the schedule for each deliverable; planning controls and monitoring deviations from deadlines; and updating and documenting changes to the project schedule and communicating implications of these changes to the Consortium’s Executive Committee.

- Cost—The PMP will work with MSDE, the grant manager and fiscal agent, and the Consortium’s Executive Committee to estimate costs, create budgets, control costs so that all work stays within budgets, create plans for overseeing accounting systems, and share forecasts.
- Quality—Using its management experience, the PMP will assess and analyze risk; communicate quality assurances to stakeholders; use effective quality-management methodologies; identify, control, and monitor risk and articulate risk responses, strategies for mitigating risk, and contingency plans; keep all stakeholders updated on project status; and conduct cost-benefit analyses.
- Resources—The PMP will work with the Consortium to plan, document, and implement steps that capitalize on existing and emerging strengths and to develop strategies for sustaining the project beyond the grant period.
- Communication—The PMP will foster effective communication within and across levels, ensuring that the most important information is shared using the most appropriate medium or approach; distributing information to appropriate audiences; managing expectations; monitoring the effectiveness of communication and technology-support systems; working with the Consortium to develop guidelines for communicating with internal and external stakeholders; and implementing mechanisms for reporting on performance outcomes.

The organization chart included on page 40 illustrates the proposed management structure for EC-CAS 2.0. Please refer to Part 6 of this grant application to review staff qualifications in the submitted résumés.



Consortium State Capacity and Commitment—While the proposed KEA and aligned formative assessments will build off of the extensive progress made by Maryland and Ohio on KEA 1.0 in their joint RTT-ELC Grant, all of the States in the Consortium have made significant progress in developing and implementing early-childhood programs, including assessments, that are consistent with the goals and priorities of this grant offering. The most relevant of these accomplishments among the states that did not participate in KEA 1.0 are described in the following sections.

Connecticut—The Kindergarten Entrance Inventory (KEI) was developed in response to Connecticut Public Act 05-245, which required the Commissioner of Education to “develop and implement a statewide developmentally appropriate kindergarten assessment tool that measures a child’s level of preparedness for kindergarten” by October 2007. The stated purpose of the KEI is to “provide a statewide snapshot of the skills students demonstrate, based on teachers’ observations, at the beginning of the kindergarten year.” The content of the KEI was selected to represent the most important skills that students need to demonstrate at the beginning of kindergarten, based on the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework and the State Curriculum Standards for language arts and mathematics that were in use at that time. A group of preschool and kindergarten teachers, representing urban and suburban districts, special education, and English language learners, reviewed the indicators and provided the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) with their recommendations on the appropriateness of the indicators. A revised version of the KEI was introduced in the fall of 2007 and has been used statewide since that time. CSDE partnered with researchers at the University of Connecticut to validate the use of the KEI. Research supporting its use addressed two broad themes: the relationship of the KEI to other measures of academic achievement and the structure of the indicators used to define each domain. In addition to the KEI, the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework was developed in 2003, based upon the early learning standards included in the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework.

Indiana—The Indiana Standards Tool for Assessment Reporting—Kindergarten Readiness (ISTAR-KR) was launched in 2009. This assessment tool is currently available to all early-learning programs as an

assessment for children from two months of age through kindergarten entry. Although kindergarten programs are not required to use the ISTAR-KR, many began to implement its use in the 2012–13 school year, with more planned to employ it in 2013–14. This assessment does not provide longitudinal data for participating children, but the potential benefit of those data is recognized. Indiana also understands the advantages of gathering this information to inform instruction in kindergarten and to show student growth from the beginning of the year to the end of the school year; therefore, it desires a tool that can provide valid comparisons across all school districts within the state.

Massachusetts—Under its RTT-ELC Grant, the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is required to design and implement a kindergarten entry assessment initiative. The federal requirements for this initiative include measurement, within the first six weeks of the kindergarten year, of kindergarten children’s skills and competencies in language/literacy, mathematics, social-emotional development, and physical development. EEC has partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) on this effort. The resulting initiative, known as the Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment (MKEA), has been designed as a formative assessment initiative in kindergarten. The expectation is that districts implement the Work Sampling System or Teaching Strategies GOLD formative assessment tool. Both assessments will help educators measure the targeted developmental domains in order to guide kindergarten teachers in designing instruction for individual children through the use of data. These two assessments are also being examined for alignment to the Massachusetts standards for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. EEC and ESE jointly developed a four-year roll-out plan for the MKEA that includes the participation of all 306 Massachusetts school districts with a kindergarten enrollment. In addition, the agencies are working together to ensure that the early elementary assessment work of PARCC informs and is informed by the MKEA work in Massachusetts.

Michigan—Michigan is in the beginning stages of implementing a statewide kindergarten entry assessment. It recently selected the Teaching Strategies GOLD online assessment for a 2013 fall pilot,

following a review plan that included stakeholder involvement in showcase demonstrations of existing assessments by other states and vendors, issuance of a Request for Proposals, and a thorough review of each proposal received. The state is currently planning to pilot the assessment in 200–300 schools this fall, during the first 45 days of school. To prepare for the fall pilot study, focus groups around experienced and new users of the KEA are being conducted to inform communications and training. In late July, 30 trainers are being trained; during the last three weeks of August, these trainers will then train the 600–900 teachers participating in the pilot. When the pilot study is complete, the state will use the information gathered to customize the assessment for a 2014 fall field test with a significantly larger group of schools and students. Statewide implementation (optional by school) is planned for fall 2015.

Nevada—The Silver State KIDS project is a statewide effort to build a comprehensive early-childhood education system that supports the ability of all children in Nevada to enter kindergarten ready to learn. The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (NECAC), managed by Nevada’s Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems (HSC&ECS) Office in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), is leading this effort, which has identified two major components of system change as priorities for implementation. Adoption of a common Kindergarten Inventory of Development Statewide (Silver State KIDS), which measures each child’s developmental status upon entering kindergarten across five domains of learning, and development of a coordinated data system that aligns pre-kindergarten data to K–12 data (and beyond) will improve understanding about which early-childhood education policies, strategies, services, and supports are the most likely to improve school readiness. This will facilitate expansion and replication of effective and proven early-childhood education practices throughout Nevada.

In the recent legislative session, the Governor’s budget included \$4 million as a part of the P-16 Council to further support the work of NECAC and work toward a common statewide kindergarten assessment and the development of an early childhood database system. Nevada is currently making some significant investments to help support these efforts. Recently, the Governor and the state legislature have

supported additional investments for full-day kindergarten as well as further support for English language learners, pre-kindergarten, and K–4 education.

(h) Kindergarten Entry Assessment Design

(1) The EC-CAS includes the KEA and formative assessments for children ages 36 months through 72 months. Both the current version of the KEA and the proposed enhanced KEA are being developed based on the CLS, which align to both Maryland and Ohio early learning and development standards extending from birth through kindergarten entry, including the States' kindergarten standards. Each of the CLS is defined by essential skills and knowledge (ESKs), currently common to Maryland and Ohio, which specify the depth and breadth of the standard. The ESKs also form the basis of the learning progressions that provide the foundation for the formative assessments. Each of the 28 (32 including The Arts) standards is aligned to a learning progression. The standards combine to form strands, and the strands combine to form domains.

The KEA and formative assessments will focus on six developmental domains: Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Motor Development and Physical Well-being, Science, and Social Studies. Presently, Maryland is the only State to be assessing The Arts. KEA 2.0, within the context of each State's existing early childhood comprehensive assessment system, will include a combination of selected-response, performance tasks, and rubric-based observational instruments, reflecting a multiple-measures approach to the assessments. Because of the limited attention span of students at the ages assessed, and in recognition of the need to assess all students within the first eight weeks of the school year, the KEA is focusing on a select number of ESKs for each standard that are seen as particularly critical and readily assessable or observable by teachers early in the school year. In contrast, the formative assessments will reflect the full range of skills and knowledge that define the learning progressions and will be designed for children from 36 months to 72 months. The formative assessments will include selected-response items, performance tasks, and observational instruments tied to each of the learning progressions.

(2) Inherent in the design process is the explicit definition of the content to be assessed. The CLS serve as the key document in the definition process. As such, all item and task development activities will be keyed to the ESKs that define the standards. To ensure consistent interpretation of the ESKs, item specifications have been developed by WestEd staff to provide operational definitions for specific knowledge and behaviors. The item specifications provide an overview of the item structures and formats and the nature of the content that is best assessed by each item type. As the items for KEA 1.0 were developed, the training of item and task development staff focused on the centrality of the ESKs in the development process and the specification of the content to be assessed. The alignment of all items, tasks, and observational rubrics to the ESKs will continue to be emphasized in future training. Throughout the assessment content development and review process, the content editors will evaluate alignment and will introduce edits, as needed, to ensure alignment.

Following the internal review of all assessments by WestEd staff, the assessments will be submitted to the States for their review, in which alignment will be one of the key considerations. The State-level reviews will be combined with the results of formal content reviews, involving representatives from all States in the Consortium. Additional edits will be made as required to meet the alignment expectations of the States. The final, edited assessments will be submitted to the States for their final review and signoff. This iterative review and signoff procedure has proven to be effective in achieving aligned items and tasks throughout WestEd's previous assessment development experience.

(3) Assessment data will be made available and transmitted, on a defined schedule, to State data systems. Data security will be enforced, end to end, during transmission via an industry-standard security method. All data will be keyed with identifiers and other metadata to allow for merging, disaggregation, reporting, and longitudinal analysis. Data will be formatted in a manner that is most agreeable and compliant with States' systems and needs, but conformity to Common Education Data Standards will be encouraged in order to foster interoperability and consistent understanding among systems and stakeholders.

(4) (i) In order to assist teachers in using the assessment data to guide instruction throughout the school year, professional development activities will support teachers in linking assessment and instruction. Four key steps for linking assessment and instruction are: (1) administering the KEA to all children in all domains; (2) interpreting assessment findings and identifying children's needs by identifying (a) which children already have all of the important age-expected skills or indicators, (b) which children might be at risk or missing a component of one or more expected skills or indicators, and (c) which children may not yet have an expected skill or indicator due to missing critical foundational and/or prerequisite behaviors; (3) aligning intentional instruction with identified needs of groups and of individual children; and (4) monitoring progress, at designated intervals, and revising instruction, as needed, to maximize effectiveness (Grisham-Brown & Pretti-Frontczak, 2011). In order to support this process, the JHU CTE Student Compass Tool will be embedded into the ORS; this will allow teachers to easily view their students' assessment results, group students by need areas, review and select interventions and strategies, and continue to monitor students' progress toward defined performance indicators.

(ii) Teacher professional-development and support needs will be identified via several media. Teachers will be trained, practice, and qualify for scoring via an online simulation tool that functions as a validation of a teacher's qualifications to administer and score the assessment with reliability. They will be directed to additional supports as needed, based upon their performance on the interrater reliability feature of the simulation tool. Self-evaluation measures are employed via discussion-board reporting. Throughout training on and implementation of the assessments, teachers will use the online community to identify additional professional-development and support needs. Peer-to-peer feedback and input from community moderators will be provided.

(iii) The ORS will be designed to provide information at the student (for use by both teachers and families), classroom, school, and state levels. At the school level, students can be placed on the learning progressions (if the formative assessments are used), and overall readiness and domain readiness scores

can be reported, based on the KEA. Classroom- and school-level reports can be used to identify persistent, widespread overall problem areas, as well as achievement gaps across student populations. The reporting scale of both the formative assessments and the KEA will allow the progress of individual students to be tracked within and across school years and allow cohorts to be tracked across years.

In order to support school-level teams in making effective educational decisions using the KEA data, a series of online professional learning modules will be made available. This professional-development series will feature TAP-IT, which is a systematic process for data-informed decision making, developed by JHU CTE faculty. TAP-IT was specifically designed to help educational teams use data to improve results for students, including those with special needs. Currently, this process is being effectively used by MSDE to support data-informed decision-making at the state, district, and school levels in order to narrow achievement gaps of students with special needs. In the TAP-IT process, a team analyzes (i.e., taps into) student and teacher data to plan an intervention for a student, implements the intervention, and then tracks its impact.

(iv) States will receive aggregate district and State reports that will allow policymakers to identify areas where students are entering school with high degrees of readiness and areas where students are entering at risk of chronic and persistent failure. Reports by subgroup (e.g., English language learners, students with disabilities) will help determine if there are systematic differences among student populations and/or if there are pockets of risk within otherwise high-performing areas.

(v) JHU CTE's expertise includes the development of data reports that have been carefully designed and piloted (via survey and focus groups) to meet the needs of parents and families. Families will be able to use graphics to determine the degree to which their children are meeting the expectations for school readiness overall and for each assessed domain. The family reports also will include targeted support activities to improve learning. Consistent with State statutes and regulations across the Consortium, reports will be made available in a variety of languages other than English.

(5) The KEA includes three basic item types—three-option selected response, performance tasks, and observational rubrics. The academic domains of Mathematics and Language and Literacy are assessed through selected-response items and performance tasks in which students are asked to demonstrate their knowledge through answering questions or performing tasks that reflect academic and real-world applications. The Science domain includes a combination of selected-response items and observational rubrics, whereas Social Studies is assessed solely through observational rubrics. The domains of Social Foundations and Motor Development and Physical Well-being are also assessed solely through observational rubrics. Suggested structured activities will be provided to teachers, to support them in evaluating student performance if the assessed behaviors have not been observed in the course of student activity. Across the six domains common to all States, a total of 15 selected-response items, 18 performance tasks, and 29 rubric-based observations combine to produce the total score on the KEA. (The methods for assessing The Arts are still under development.)

(6) In KEA 1.0, options exist to administer the assessment via paper and pencil or via computer presentation of the selected-response items and performance tasks. Teachers directly observe student performance on the items and tasks, and record student answers to selected-response items, which are then scored automatically by the ORS. Up to ten items are interactive. For performance tasks, test administrators are required to observe and score student responses and enter the scores within the ORS.

In KEA 2.0, students will be able to interact directly with the assessment platform to indicate and record their responses to selected-response items, and to perform many of the tasks by employing a variety of system capabilities, including, for example, drag-and-drop features. Student responses requiring the evaluation and scoring of a verbal student response will continue to be scored by teachers, as the ability to capture and automatically score students' verbal responses remains an emerging technology to be explored for this project. However, accommodations for English language learners, such as directions given in languages other than English to improve accessibility, will be a feature of KEA 2.0.

(7) In KEA 1.0, teachers are required to record student responses to some selected-response items because only ten of the items are interactive. In KEA 2.0, the ORS will provide for the capture of student responses to all of the selected-response items and will automatically score them in real time. Because of the variety of response modes required for the performance tasks, including verbal responses, KEA 2.0 will still require teachers to score student responses to the performance tasks and to directly enter those scores into the ORS. This scoring will be done in real time as part of the task administration.

For the observational rubrics, teachers will directly enter their observations into the ORS, either in real time or at intervals convenient for the teachers.

(8) It will be critical for the Consortium to develop procedures for standard setting that are collaborative and transparent to all States. WestEd will lead the standard-setting activities, along with Dr. Jessica Goldstein of the University of Connecticut, and will vet all steps in the process with the national TAC. The key activities for standard setting include selection of the standard-setting method (e.g., bookmark, body of work), determination of the number of performance levels, development of the performance level descriptors, approval of the preliminary performance level descriptors by the Consortium, recruitment of participants, preparation of materials for the standard-setting session, training of staff facilitators, implementation of the standard-setting method, finalization of the performance level descriptors, and, finally, approval of the performance level descriptors and the corresponding cut points on the performance continuum. One key decision that Consortium States must make is whether to set standards on the field-test data or to wait until the first live administration. While the latter is typically preferable because of the quality of resultant data, waiting for the live administration will push standard setting beyond the timeframe of this grant.

While all of the aforementioned standard-setting steps are critical to the development of valid, reliable, and fair performance standards for students, the engagement of representatives from each of the States is especially critical for ensuring broad-based, informed decisions about the levels of performance expected of students. Each State must provide representative key stakeholders to the standard-setting

panel. These key stakeholders should, at a minimum, include family members/parents, early-childhood/preschool educators, kindergarten teachers, early-childhood/development experts, and specialists on students with disabilities and English language learners. The recommended steps for the recruitment of panelists include identifying key stakeholder groups and desired panelist groups; determining the qualifications of panelists for each panelist type; asking stakeholder groups to nominate prospective panelists; and selecting from among the qualified nominees to satisfy the desired distribution. Establishing these explicit qualifications and recruitment strategies will produce the intended distribution and qualifications of the standard-setting panelists and enable evaluation of how well these intentions were realized. This will provide valuable evidence of defensibility of the standards that will result from the process (Hambleton, 2001).

(9) The following table summarizes the specific contents of proposed reports for specific audiences, as well as benefits and/or uses of the reports for each audience.

Audience	Reports	Benefits/Uses
Principals and Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary school-level performance reports by domain • Summary performance reports by students' age and/or birth date • Summary performance reports by gender, race/ethnicity, English language learner and/or disability status, and other demographic characteristics • Quarterly or biannual facility-/school-level formative assessment reports • Quarterly or biannual teacher-/co- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs principals of professional-development needs for teachers and co-teachers • Informs principals of strengths and possible weaknesses in programs • Informs principals of intervention needs for students • Supports routine data analysis of student and teacher performance

Audience	Reports	Benefits/Uses
	<p>teacher-level formative assessment reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly or biannual formative assessment reports by domain Status reports providing pre-kindergarten schools and centers information on the preparedness of their students for entry into kindergarten 	
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary performance reports on current classes Summary performance reports on current classes by domain Summary performance reports on individual students Quarterly formative assessment reports on current classes Quarterly formative assessment reports on current classes by domain Quarterly formative assessment reports on individual students Reports analyzing how close classes are to projected targets, based on the first summative assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes evidence-based instructional decisions for classes and individual students Generates ongoing performance data for timely refinement and adjustment of instructional strategies Promotes personalization of instruction Informs teachers of any gaps in the curriculum Informs teachers of needed professional development for improving performance

Audience	Reports	Benefits/Uses
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary performance reports for children by domain • Quarterly formative assessment reports for children by domain • Quarterly reports analyzing how close children are to reaching end-of-year targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates transparency between the facility/school and the family • Encourages a collaborative approach to student learning • Supports the personalization of instructional delivery and needed interventions • Informs future supports needed to help students reach targeted goals (e.g., grouping, homework, tutoring)

(10) The States within the Consortium, whether aligned with Smarter Balanced or PARCC, will be implementing assessments for grades 3–8 and high school that provide information about students’ ongoing performance against standards for college and career readiness, as measured by assessments aligned to the States’ K–12 standards. As an assessment for readiness for kindergarten entry, the KEA now provides one of the “bookends” for entering and exiting K–12 education, tied to the expectations expressed through the States’ K–12 standards. Including the KEA within a State’s student assessment system will enable identification of students at risk of failure or falling behind as they enter the K–12 educational system (or earlier, for those students who are enrolled in child-care or preschool programs that administer the formative assessments).

(i) Kindergarten Entry Assessment Development Plan

(1)(i) WestEd proposes implementing an Evidence-Centered Design (ECD) approach to the KEA item and task development. Our approach is modeled on the best practices in assessment design introduced by Mislevy, Steinberg, and Almond (2003), and it has been adapted by WestEd, over the past

decade, to support traditional item development practices as well as the design and development of innovative item types implementing technology-enhanced features. ECD reflects an integrated approach to constructing educational assessments in terms of evidentiary arguments that can be used to improve the validity of items and tests.

ECD builds on the vision of Samuel Messick (1994): “the nature of the construct being assessed should guide the selection or construction of relevant tasks, as well as the rational development of construct-based scoring criteria and rubrics.” ECD is a systematic approach to the design of assessments that focuses on the evidence (student performance and products) of proficiencies as the basis for constructing assessment tasks. It provides a way to reason about assessment design and a way to reason about learner performance. Collecting the right information from assessments that help to make accurate inferences about students’ competencies is critical because these inferences will inform policy and instructional decisions that promote learning.

The use of ECD will also be critical in WestEd’s ability to design assessments that support valid and reliable decisions for all students. To strengthen that evidentiary argument, particularly for students with disabilities or students who are English language learners, it is important that the assessment design consider not only the constructs that are targeted for measurement, but also constructs that are not targeted for measurement (e.g., sight, hearing, or certain aspects of the English language) and that could interfere with measurement of the targeted constructs (Hansen & Mislevy, 2008; Mislevy & Haertel, 2006). Assessment designs that are valid across populations will specify accessibility features that minimize or eliminate the impact of these non-targeted constructs through the use of Universal Design principles. ECD provides a framework that makes the underlying evidentiary argument more explicit—thereby supporting sharing and communication among assessment designers, test delivery platform developers, and psychometricians, who can work together to minimize the influences of non-targeted constructs—and supports an examination of the validity of inferences. ECD considers the targeted

constructs, the observations collected, and the context in which those observations occur (Hansen & Mislevy, 2008; Zhang et al., 2009).

At its core, ECD requires assessment developers to perform five important steps in the development of an assessment instrument. As described by Mislevy, Almond, and Lukas (2003), these steps include:

1. Domain analysis: Defining the content and subcontent areas to be included in the assessment.
2. Domain modeling: A high-level description of the components of the assessment that provide evidence to support inferences.
3. Conceptual assessment validity framework: Clear articulation of the construct(s) that are targeted within the domain, articulation of unintended constructs that may cause construct-irrelevant variance, and specifications for tasks that provide a context in which evidence about the targeted knowledge or skill is collected without construct-irrelevant variance.
4. Item and task development: Development of items and tasks that are based on the specifications developed during the third step and that are used to form the assessment instrument(s) used to collect observations that serve as the evidence from which inferences will be made.
5. Evidence collection: Description of the conditions and procedures through which assessment instruments are delivered, and design for reporting results that enables valid inferences about the knowledge, skills, and abilities targeted within the defined domain.

WestEd has recently supported the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium as it developed its item specifications through the application of ECD principles, and will draw on this experience as the development of the KEA is expanded.

(ii) The development model enacted by the Consortium places significant value on the involvement of stakeholders and content and development experts. The track record of inclusiveness established by Maryland and Ohio will continue as the work is expanded. The Consortium States will continue to provide significant leadership and guidance, through the Executive Committee, as the assessment system

is developed, to ensure that the developed assessment system meets their needs and will support their educators and families in improving the learning of all children.

The assessment development process will involve state-identified ad hoc and standing committees for content review of the learning progressions and all assessment materials. The content-review committees will combine early-childhood and kindergarten teachers, early-childhood measurement experts, and consultants. In addition, the States will convene a common, cross-state bias and sensitivity review committee that will include both early-childhood experts and educators who work with English language learners and students with disabilities. The States will also actively engage families and representatives from their early-childhood advisory councils, and will establish a State advisory committee to review the assessment development process. These actions will provide a means to engage all key stakeholders in the review process prior to field-test and operational implementation.

As the lead for content development, WestEd recognizes the importance of building bridges among developmental, content, assessment, and psychometric experts. Consequently, WestEd has assembled a team that combines these areas of expertise. WestEd's CCFS program is a leader in promoting high-quality, research-based, early child-care and educational services. Its work informs national, State, and local child and family policies. CCFS staff have developed the learning progressions and continue to serve as early-childhood expert advisors to the project, reflecting the latest research in the field. WestEd's ASDS program leads the assessment development activities. As a research and development organization, WestEd will work collaboratively with the University of Connecticut to design and implement the necessary psychometric analyses and research activities to ensure that the developed assessment system meets criteria for reliability and validity.

JHU CTE complements the team by providing its expertise in emerging technologies and professional development. JHU CTE is recognized for its application development, which capitalizes on emerging technologies to support classroom management, reporting, and data-driven decision-making. Its knowledge of delivery systems will support the goal of developing a user-friendly platform for student

use with the assistive technology needed to meet the needs of English language learners and students with disabilities. The technology infrastructure will also support administration, recording, scoring, and reporting functions and will provide for the importing and exporting of data to State longitudinal and early-learning data systems. JHU CTE is also known for its high-quality professional development, and it will provide both training and support for the use of the assessment system, as well as instructional implications based on student and classroom results.

Finally, CCSO is facilitating the work of the national TAC, which provides critical review and advice on early childhood learning, assessment, and technology.

(2) A primary goal of the project work is to develop, through the use of ECD and Universal Design principles, assessments that are as universally accessible to students as possible, but there will be students who, due to disabilities, developmental delays, and/or limited English language proficiency, will require accommodations. JHU CTE will lead expert work groups, including practitioners from each Consortium State, convened specifically to address accommodations policies for these students. Using the accommodations policies and assessment design features of PARCC and Smarter Balanced as models, the work groups will ensure that the assessment system includes universal accessibility features that remain true to the purpose and vision of the assessment, and that, from the time of its inception, individualized supports and accommodations for children with special learning needs are considered. Members of the work groups will draft and review policies regarding, but not limited to, participation requirements, the application of accessibility features to assessment administration, and the provision of accommodations. These policies will be grounded in research on best practices for assessing young children, with an emphasis on assessing special populations. The work groups will also assist in designing content for professional development, to disseminate to teachers and other IEP team members in schools. The policies and professional development will be piloted and field tested during the applicable phases of assessment development. Data will be gathered during each phase in order to evaluate appropriateness,

usability, and feasibility. Once the policies and professional development protocols are finalized, the partnering States will adopt them.

(3) Accurate and consistent scoring of the assessment items and ratings of observational behaviors is a necessity for a reliable and valid assessment system. Methods to achieve accurate and consistent scoring will be incorporated into the development of the items and tasks themselves, the rubrics, scored exemplars, and training.

ECD will be instrumental in supporting the development of the items and tasks. The conceptual assessment validity framework, a key component of ECD, involves articulation of the construct(s) to be assessed and specifications for items and tasks that provide a context in which evidence about the targeted knowledge and skill can be collected. By clearly specifying the construct and contexts to be assessed, the development process is purposefully guided to consider appropriate evidence of student performance, including the relative ease of evidence collection and the reliability of observing and rating student performance.

As previously described, the KEA and formative assessments will include selected-response items that have a single correct answer and will be machine scored. The performance tasks will require training of teachers. This training will be available online and will allow individuals to work at their own pace through the materials and repeat sessions, as needed. The performance tasks will have well-defined rubrics that clearly differentiate student performance by score point. The observational rubrics will be further supplemented with anchor papers that exemplify each of the score points. In addition, training sets will provide further support for the application of the rubrics to student work. The training materials will also include student work that does not clearly align to the anchors, to support teachers in scoring the full range of student work. Before teachers are allowed to score operational student work, they must demonstrate their ability to accurately score student work by achieving a level of accuracy (to be determined) in which adjacent, but not discrepant, scores will be allowed. The industry standard is a minimum of 80% exact agreement, but this standard will be vetted with the TAC before implementation.

Observational rubrics will also require teacher training, as they will be based on a 0–2 scale for the KEA and a 0–3 scale for the formative assessments. The decision to move toward a 0–2 scale for the KEA observational instruments was based on results of the KEA 1.0 pilot study, in which teachers were asked to compare the use of the checklists (employing a 0–2 scale) with the use of observational rubrics based on a 0–3 scale. Whereas teachers preferred the ease of use of the checklists, they preferred the rubric language, which defined the student behavior to be observed at each score point, for reasons of consistency of ratings. Given the need to administer the KEA to all students within the initial eight weeks of instruction, WestEd recommends the use of the rubric-based score descriptions with an abbreviated scale, to maximize efficiency and reliability. The formative assessments will continue to use the 0–3 scale in order to allow for finer distinctions in student performance and thus provide more diagnostic information to support instructional decisions.

Training for teachers on the use of the observational rubrics will be delivered online through the use of videos of students. Just as with the scorer training for the performance tasks, anchor, training, and qualifying videos will be available for each rubric. Administrators must achieve the desired level of accuracy in rating of student behavior in order to rate students during the operational administration of the KEA and the formative assessments.

During the field test, a within-school moderation system, in which a fellow teacher or school administrator will observe students' performance and/or behavior to determine interrater reliability for the performance tasks and observational rubrics, will be employed. The results of these analyses will help to identify potential scorer training issues and allow revision to the scoring materials in advance of their operational use. The ongoing process for moderation and monitoring of scorer behavior is a key component of the research agenda.

(4) The underlying goal of the ORS is to provide the relevant stakeholders with reliable, valid information that can be used to inform student-, classroom-, school-, program-, and state-level decisions. Given the stakes associated with these decisions, it is critical that the reliability of the information

provided be appropriate for its use. For example, while individual student scores on the ESKs assessed on the KEA may be seen as valuable, the limits of testing time do not allow for sufficient test items for each assessed ESK to support this level of reporting. However, due to the number of students tested within the classroom, it may be possible to report these data at the classroom level, subject to the data meeting a minimum reliability threshold. Consequently, student-level reports for the KEA will focus on reporting at the domain and total score levels. KEA reporting at the ESK, learning progression, and strand levels will be subject to psychometric review.

However, the project team believes that the formative assessment results must be reported by individual learning progression, because these assessment items and tasks are designed to inform individual instructional decisions for students. Each formative assessment task will provide evidence to support the placement of a student along a learning progression, and as such, the scores for individual students must be made available to classroom teachers. Having the capability to capture a “snapshot” of the status of an individual classroom is also valuable for informing classroom instruction. These data can be reported at the school level, across classrooms. The reporting of the formative data will be limited to the classroom and school levels.

Strategies for developing the reporting system will leverage innovative technology-driven solutions to generate and disseminate customized reports that deliver information to key stakeholders. Report dissemination efforts using information technologies can have greater reach, adoption, implementation, and maintenance, and, therefore, greater public impact; however, these efforts have to be designed with careful consideration of the populations and educational environments involved. The interactive reporting mechanisms will use user-centered designs to address the needs, limitations, and desired system functions of educators, administrators, and families/caregivers. As such, it will be essential to clearly identify the demographics and related system functions of each user group. The Consortium will administer surveys to key stakeholders, which will help to finalize a list of desired and necessary system features for each specific group of users.

Score reports resulting from the KEA will build on the Consortium's experience with delivering meaningful, uniform score reports customized to the needs of the various stakeholders at different levels. All levels of reporting will focus on providing a context for interpreting the assessment results; however, these contexts will differ by key stakeholder needs. To this end, the Consortium will explore how to most effectively develop: (a) reports for families, which present interactive assessment results to help families and caregivers understand the specific strengths and weaknesses of their children's knowledge, skills, and abilities; (b) reports for educators, which provide detailed information that can be interactively displayed according to domain and overall score, question type, and performance level; (c) reports for administrators, which provide aggregate information that helps to build instructional and professional development strategies for early-childhood education; and (d) state-level reports, which can inform policy decisions about the adequacy of educational programs and centers to prepare students for entry into kindergarten.

Central to each of these reporting levels will be users' ability to engage and interact with the assessment data. All key stakeholders will be provided with narrative and graphical components within the reports, which will provide context for interpreting the reports. For example, families/caregivers will be presented with a narrative describing early childhood development, which can help to explain why certain skills are essential for learning and describe key practices that families can implement at home to support their children's learning. Similarly, educators will receive interactive graphical reports at the student and classroom levels, which will enable them to explore specific concepts or learning progressions and examine how both individual students and whole classes are performing.

(5) Given the ambitious nature of the Consortium's goals for the development of the EC-CAS, it is critical to establish processes for quality control throughout the item/task development process. The proposed management structure places both the day-to-day management of the Consortium and the development process with WestEd as PMP and lead item developer. Given WestEd's combined roles of management and development, it will maintain constant and clear communication about the ongoing

status of all development. As outlined in the management plan in section (g), WestEd's success in serving as the PMP for Smarter Balanced has prepared it to work within the unique demands placed on the activities of a consortium committed to the development of an assessment system. WestEd has established processes and procedures to document all phases of the development process and methods to evaluate progress in meeting the goals of each phase on a regular and ongoing basis.

Effective management of processes will be critical in maintaining quality control, but ensuring that the development processes themselves are sound is equally important. WestEd's knowledge of and experience with test development practices, combined with the critical research and evaluation provided by the University of Connecticut, will ensure fidelity to established standards for the development of a fair, reliable, and valid assessment system. Key steps that have been built into the process include cognitive interviews to determine students' strategies for responding to items and tasks, pilot testing of items among representative samples of students from all Consortium States, revision and refinement of items based on the results of cognitive interviews and pilot tests, item and bias review committees composed primarily of early-childhood educators, field testing all items before operational use, implementation of accommodations strategies with purposeful inclusion of students with disabilities or developmental delays and English language learners in the field test, and training of all teachers for the administration and scoring of the assessments. All assessment reports will be evaluated for their potential use, anticipating both intended and unintended consequences. Care will be given to providing documentation to ensure the appropriate interpretation and use of all reports. Quality-control procedures will be established to ensure the accuracy of all reports before distribution.

Finally, WestEd will ensure involvement of Consortium State leads and the TAC in the review of all proposed procedures, to ensure that these procedures reflect the quality and technical standards expected of the States and the research and assessment communities.

Description of Absolute Priorities

Priority 1 (Collaboration)—With the goal of developing a comprehensive assessment system, the Consortium comprises seven States (Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, and Ohio) and three prominent educational research and development organizations: WestEd’s Assessment & Standards Development Services and Center for Child & Family Studies, the Johns Hopkins Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE), and the University of Connecticut’s Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Program. Additionally, the Council of Chief State School Officers has committed resources and supports for the Technical Advisory Committee. These organizations will assist the Consortium in its efforts to build a reliable, valid, and high-quality assessment system that is based on current research and best practices. WestEd will serve as the Project Management Partner and lead assessment developer. In these roles, WestEd will use its extensive experience and expertise in assessment development and management to ensure that the assessment items and tools reliably measure and align to children’s learning and development across the essential domains of school readiness. The Consortium’s collaboration with JHU CTE will ensure that the assessment system incorporates technology wherever possible, including support for administration, scoring, and reporting of the assessment instruments. In addition, JHU CTE will provide professional-development support to the Consortium, including face-to-face and online training, technical assistance, coaching, and providing instructional resources through learning communities and collaborations. The University of Connecticut, in conjunction with WestEd, will provide the Consortium with research and evaluation assistance to ensure that evidence-based practices are employed.

Priority 2 (Multiple Measures)—The Consortium’s assessment system will measure the full range of early learning and development standards across all essential domains of school readiness. The assessment system will utilize several assessment methods, including selected-response items, performance tasks, and observational rubrics, aligned to learning progressions that encompass children’s performance across the spectrum of development. All components of the assessment system will

incorporate the principles of Universal Design that seek to eliminate aspects of items and tasks that increase the presence of construct-irrelevant factors that preclude access for English language learners and children with disabilities or developmental delays.

Priority 3 (Charting Student Progress)—In order to chart student progress over time, the Consortium will utilize technology in the administration of the assessment instruments and the collection and reporting of data. This will allow all stakeholders (e.g., administrators, teachers, families) to track children’s progress from preschool through kindergarten, and in subsequent years. The assessment items will be aligned to learning progressions that span the developmental spectrum and that provide teachers, early-learning providers, and families with the capacity to offer individualized instruction and support. Furthermore, the KEA will result in a comprehensive score across the learning progressions for each child, which can then be incorporated into States’ longitudinal data systems.

Priority 4 (Comprehensive Academic Assessment Instruments)—The Consortium recognizes the value of a system of summative and formative assessments that are organized around a common set of early learning and development standards that measure the entire range of skills across the essential domains of school readiness. The KEA summative assessment will utilize multiple item types, including, but not limited to, selected-response items, performance tasks, and observational rubrics; technology will be used to deliver and/or enhance the assessment. The learning progressions support aligned formative tools leading up to the KEA and then extending the available information through the end of kindergarten. This range of balanced, aligned instrumentation will identify students’ strengths and weaknesses, identify instructional intervention strategies, and track student progress over time and across cohorts.

Priority 5 (KEA)—The Consortium proposes to enhance KEA 1.0, currently in development by Maryland and Ohio, and build KEA 2.0 to adhere to all of the requirements set forth in this grant competition. KEA 2.0 will provide the Consortium States with valid, reliable, and fair information on children’s readiness for school across the essential domains of school readiness, including Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Motor Development and Physical Well-being,

Science, Social Studies, and The Arts. Further, KEA 2.0 will utilize multiple methods of assessment, including selected-response items, performance tasks, and observational rubrics, that are consistent with nationally recognized technical standards, research, and best practices, and will employ the principles of Universal Design in order to assess all children upon entry to kindergarten. The summative results, consisting, at a minimum, of domain-level scores and comprehensive scores, from KEA 2.0 will then provide all stakeholders, including families, with appropriate information to help guide individualized instruction and inform program and policy decisions to help improve student achievement.

KEA 2.0 will be administered by trained teachers and assessors in the first eight weeks of school and will utilize technology in the administration of assessment items and in the collection and reporting of data. The online reporting system will be able to export data for use in a State's assessment or longitudinal data systems, and will be able to create reports for teachers, administrators, early-childhood providers, and families, in order to reflect a child's learning and development against set levels of performance. The KEA will not be used to prevent entry into kindergarten or for any purpose for which it has not been validated.

Description of Competitive Preference Priority

The state education agencies from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Indiana, Michigan, Nevada, and Ohio join the Maryland State Department of Education in its application for this grant. Each of these states has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that describes the vision and principles of the Consortium; the roles and responsibilities of the Consortium and its member States; and the governance structure and activities of the States in the Consortium. The MOUs are included within this application.

Appendix A – High-Level Project Plan for EC-CAS 2.0

Budget Year	Activity	Timeline	Responsible Party
Phase I (2013–2014)	Consortium Kickoff Meeting	Nov	CS, WE, CTE
	Development Specifications	Nov – Jan	EC, WE, CTE
	Technical Advisory Committee Meeting	Feb	EC, CCSO, WE, CTE
	Initial Item and Technology Development	Feb – Mar	WE and CTE
	Human Subjects Committee Protocol	Mar – Apr	WE
	Student Cognitive and Teacher Interviews	Apr	WE and CTE
	Item and Technology Development (cont.)	Apr – Jun	WE and CTE
	Pilot Test Recruitment and Preparation	May – Aug	CS
	Bias/Content Review of Items	Jun	WE
Phase II (2014–2015)	Pilot Test Administration	Sep – Oct	CS, WE, CTE
	Analyze Data from Pilot Test	Nov – Dec	WE, CTE, UConn
	Technical Report (Pilot Summary)	Jan – Feb	WE, CTE, UConn
	Technical Advisory Committee Meeting	Feb	EC, CCSO, WE, CTE
	Revise Development Specifications	Jan – Mar	WE and CTE
	Item Development for Field Test	Mar – Jun	WE
	Field Test Recruitment	May – Jun	CS
	Bias and Content Review of Items	Jul	WE
	Field Test Preparation	Jul – Aug	WE and CTE
Phase III (2015–2016)	Field Test Administration	Sep – Oct	CS, WE, CTE
	Analyze Data from Field Test	Nov – Dec	WE, CTE, UConn
	Field Test Report (item statistics)	Jan – Feb	WE, CTE, UConn
	Technical Advisory Committee Meeting	Feb	EC, CCSO, WE, CTE
Post Award (2016–2017)	KEA Census Administration	Sep – Oct	CS, WE, CTE
	Census Report	Nov – Dec	WE, CTE, UConn
Virtual Executive Committee Meetings (Monthly); In-person Meetings two times per year (TBA)			
CS = Consortium States; CTE = JHU Center for Technology in Education;			
EC = Executive Committee; WE = WestEd			

E-1 References- only use highlighted ones; others were removed form narrative

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